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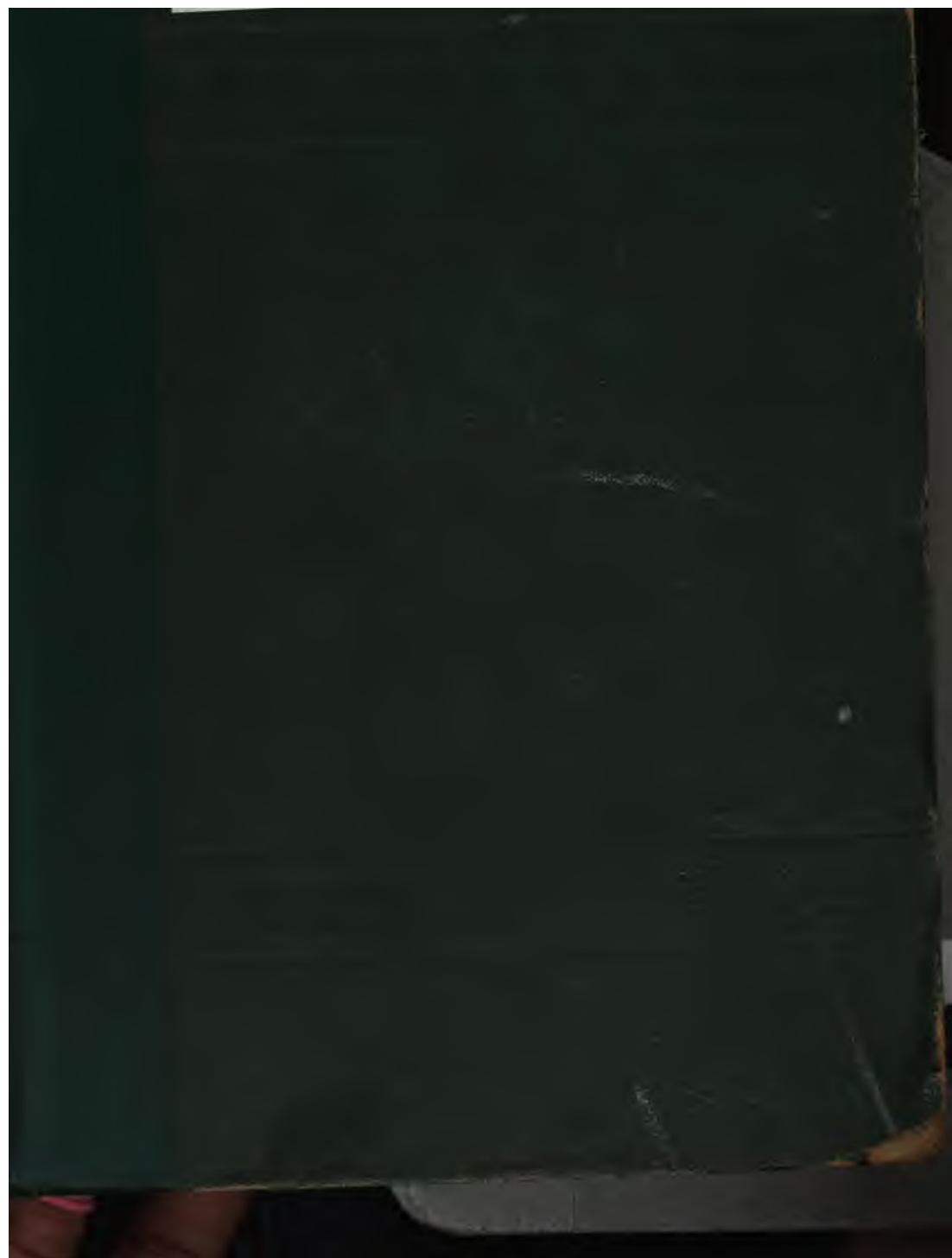
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THE
ILIAD OF HOMER
TRANSLATED

RIVINGTONS

London.....*Waterloo Place*
Oxford.....*High Street*
Cambridge.....*Trinity Street*

Homer.

THE

ILIAD OF HOMER

TRANSLATED

63169

By J. G. CORDERY

LATE OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND NOW OF H. M. BENGAL
CIVIL SERVICE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

RIVINGTONS
London, Oxford, and Cambridge
1871

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Corrigenda.

Book xv. 341, *for* Shrank back with *read* Recoil'd with

Book xvi. 503, *for* faceward down *read* flat to earth

Iliad 𐤀𐤋𐤁𐤁

WHEN midst Achaia's galleys all embroil'd
Zeus had advanced great Hector and his host,
There to their sufferings and unending toil
He left them, but aloof his shining eyes
Turn'd tow'rd the region of the horseman hordes
Of Thrace, the famed Musæans, and the tribe,
Purest of men, the Hippomolgian race,
Whose food is milk, nor know they other wealth
Nor thence return'd his shining eyes to Troy ;
It enter'd not his heart that any God
Durst now descend for help to either host.

10

But not for nought his watch Poseidon held,
The sovran Lord of Ocean ; on the peak
Loftiest o'er wooded Samothrace he sate
Brooding astonied o'er the dire affray ;
For thence all Ida stands in clear aspèct,
And Priam's city, and Achaia's fleet :
There therefore he, ascending from the deep,
Took seat, and, as he gazed, wax'd wroth with Zeus,
Pitiful for Achaia's rout by Troy.

20

Soon from the craggy hill he straight came down
With swiftest step, gigantic ; quaked the woods,
Quiver'd the mountains all along their heights
Under the foot of an Immortal God.
Three strides he strode, the fourth he gain'd his goal,
Ægæ ; where in the abysses of the deep
Glistening and incorruptible of gold
His glorious mansion stands : he enter'd in,
And there beneath his chariot drew to yoke
Fast-flying horses, maned with flowing gold, 30
Hooved with bright brass, and girt himself in gold,
Took golden goad, and sprang upon the car ;
So forth upon the billows ; round whose path
Huge monsters gamboll'd, gathering from the depths,
Afar, anear, and joyous knew their Lord ;
For glee the ocean stood in sunder clov'n ;
Whilst lightly flew the steeds, nor 'neath the car
The burnish'd axle moisten'd with the brine.

Thus tow'rd the fleet his coursers bare the God.

Farsunken in the abysses of the deep, 40
'Twixt the steep Imbrian cliffs and Tenedos,
Lies low a spacious cavern ; there his steeds
Earth-shaking Poseidaion reining stay'd,
And loosed them from the yoke, and 'fore them threw
Ambrosial food, but clasp'd about their feet
Links of pure gold indissolubly bound,
There to await unmoved their Lord's return,

Who, thence ascending, mingled with the camp.

Dense in array, and forceful as a blast
Of fire or whirlwind, sateless of the war, 50
Loud and tumultuous, came the Trojan host,
Pressing upon the heels of Priam's Son ;
And now were hoping all the fleet destroy'd
And all the Achaians slaughter'd at their sterns ;
When vast Poseidon from the billowy sea
Uprose, and, taking image of the form
And voice of Calchas, quicken'd to the war
The Argive host ; and first the Ajax-two,
Themselves most fain for battle, thus address'd :

“ Ye, if to valour, not to chill dismay, 60
Ye turn your thoughts—ye two will save the host.
Elsewhere, albeit they swarm across the wall,
I dread not unwithstood the ranks of Troy ;
Elsewhere our mailèd warriors may suffice :
But there, I dread, some mortal hurt may hap,
Where Hector, flamelike, in this fury's height,
Leads, and boasts loud his birth from mighty Zeus.
But let some God implant it in your hearts
Yourselves to stand, and give your followers cheer,
Then, though the great Olympian fires him on, 70
Ye yet may stave his onset off the ships.”

The great Earth-shaker spoke, and with his staff
Striking, fill'd either Ajax through the heart
With spirit high, and made his limbs and feet

Nimble and light, nor less his hands above.
Then sudden, as a swift-wing'd falcon starts
Vanishing from his perch on some steep cliff
To chase a quarry on the plain below,
Ev'n thus Poseidon vanish'd from their ken.
The fleetfoot Ajax, son of Oïleus, 80
First knew him, and address'd the other thus :

“ Since, Ajax, some one of immortal Powers
Hath bid us battle steadfast 'mongst the ships,—
This was not Calchas, no mere prophet this ;
The flashes of his feet and armèd skirts,
As he departed, I beheld, and knew,
For Gods are easy to discern from men ;—
Therefore my heart beats buoyant in my breast,
Yea, hand and foot are throbbing to the fray.”

Whom Telamonian Ajax answer'd thus : 90
“ So too my fingers quiver round my spear
More closely ; and my pulse beats high ; my foot
Would bear me onward. Oh, to meet in fight
Yon furious-hearted hero, hand to hand !”

So spoke they, each to other, in the glee
Exultant, which the God had on them breathed.

Meantime the God bestirr'd the rearward chiefs,
Who stood refreshing their brave hearts with rest
Beside the galleys ; for their limbs were slack'd
With dire fatigue, and pain was at their hearts, 100
Seeing the Trojans pouring in dense swarm

Across the trench ; and to themselves they said
From out this jeopardy was no escape ;
Till Enosichthon, moving with all ease
Amongst them, quicken'd every rank to war :
To Teucer first and Leïtus he call'd,
Deïpyrus, the hero Peneleus,
Thoas, and those two lovers of the fray,
Meriones, and bold Antilochus ;
These he invoked, and spoke his wingèd words : 110
 " For your own noble names, for honour's sake,
Princes, strive now your utmost ! Yea, to you
I trust for rescue of our ships and lives ;
And if ye falter in this fearful fight
Our hour hath come, to fall subdued by Troy.
Oh, what dire marvel these mine eyes behold,
A miracle I ne'er had said could hap,
The Trojans midst our galleys ! who of late
Show'd but as deer to leopards in a glen—
Stray weaklings, with no spirit unto war ; 120
Ev'n thus, some few hours since, they durst not bide
Achaia's charge—not one short moment's space ;
Yet now are battling midst our swift black barks,
Far vanward from their city ! This the fault
Of our own king, and of our wills perverse,
That, wroth with him, we reck not to defend
Our galleys, but fall liever amongst them slain.
Yet though in very sooth we lay this blame
On Agamemnon, Atreus' son, the King,

In that he outraged Peleus' blameless Son, 130
Not therefore should we slacken ; rather, haste
To purge us (as brave hearts do use) from fear.
In what vile fashion shrink ye from the fray,
Ye chieftains, ye, our noblest ! Were the man
Who fought thus some poor laggard of the ranks
I were not chafed ; with you I wax most wroth.
Nay, friends, take heart ; for by this coward show
Ye make the ill but greater ; call to mind
Your honour, and your shame ; for, lo, the strife
Is at its hottest ; Hector, Hector stands 140
Fierce at your ships, hath burst your gates and bars."

Thus speaking vast Poseidon cheer'd them on,
And round the Ajax-twain they drew in ranks
Close-gather'd, such as Ares might not scorn,
Nor She who kindleth nations unto war :
For there the best and bravest bode the charge
Of Hector and his host ; there spear to spear
And shield to shield, as rooted in the earth,
Fencelike, they rallied ; helm by helm they stood,
Buckler by buckler, man by man, upstay'd ; 150
Whose nodding plumes upon their glittering crests
Mingled, so dense they rallied, side by side,
Whose spears from strong right-hands upcurling shook,
Whose blood ran hot, whose hearts were set, to fight.

On whom the Trojans push'd, and foremost charged
Hector, in onset, as some boulder huge,

Borne by a torrent o'er a cliff's sharp brow,
In winter, when the rains have rent the bonds
That held the monstrous mass upon the ledge,
Flies bounding down; and loud the crash of woods 160
Beneath it; but it falls apace, unlet,
Unhinder'd, till it dashes on the plain,
Where, maugre all its force, it rolls no more;
So for a season loud rang Hector's vaunts,
Ev'n to the sea, and to the tents and fleet,
To slaughter irresistible the foe;
So ceased he, dash'd upon that serried square;
For there Achaia's sons in bristling band
With front of sword and spear, steel-shod, steel-tipp'd,
Repell'd him from amongst them; and he reel'd 170
Backward, in all confusion, shouting loud:

“Stand, Trojans, Lycians! Dardan men-at-arms,
Stand firm; the enemy will not stay me long,
Though now they gather, like some tower, four-square;
But soon shall turn, if Zeus inspires me true,
The Thunderer, Herè's Lord, of Gods supreme.”

He spoke, and quicken'd every hand and heart.

From whom Deïphobus strode foremost forth,
With haughty heart advancing, Priam's son,
Lightly he moved, and held his orbèd shield 180
Before him, sheltering every stride he strode;
Against him sent Meriones his spear,
And struck, nor err'd, full on the orbèd shield

Of tough bull-hide, but pierced not through ; the shaft
Dropp'd, broken at the splice ; Deïphobus
Held from himself his buckler out, in fear,
The lance of brave Meriones would pierce ;
But back that hero drew him, chafed at heart
For either loss—the victory and the spear ;
And hasted through the ships and camp, to fetch 190
A second lance that lay within his tent ;
Whilst still, with loud uproar, the hosts fought on.

First Teucer, son of Telamon, struck down
The warrior Imbrius, Mentor's wealthy son,
Who, ere the coming of Achaia's host,
Dwelt in Pedæus, but had wedded erst
A bastard daughter of the king, by name
Medesicasta ; wherefore, when the fleet
Arrived at Ilion, he return'd, and dwelt
With Priam, honour'd by him, as he were 200
His own dear son, and famed throughout the host.
Him 'neath the ear the son of Telamon
Pierced with long lance, and drew the weapon back.
He fell, as falls an ash, by brazen axe
Hewn, on the brow of mountain far-beheld,
And levelling to the earth its tender leaves ;
So he ; and his enamell'd mail clash'd loud.
On whom sprang Teucer, eager for the spoil ;
But Hector then in turn at Teucer threw ;
Who saw, and by strait space the javelin shunn'd ; 210

Which, falling on Amphimachus, the son
Of Cteatus Actorion, went driven
By his own forward onset through the chest ;
He dropp'd ; and loudly on him clash'd the arms.
Then Hector forward sprang to seize the helm
Spoil off the temples of Amphimachus ;
But Ajax saw, and struck with gleaming lance,
And, though he might not touch him to the skin
(Shelter'd from foot to head in brazen mail),
Yet on the buckler's boss impinged so full, 220
It dash'd him back perforce, who rearward reel'd
From either corse, and either corse was won :
Amphimachus the two Athenian chiefs,
Divine Menestheus and brave Stychius,
Bare from the battle to Achaia's ships :
But keen on Imbrius either Ajax sprang ;
And as two lions carry off a goat
From jag-tooth'd hounds, and through thick underwood,
Well lifted 'twixt their jaws above the ground,
Bear it ; so those two helmèd chiefs upbore 230
The body high, and stripp'd it of its arms ;
Off which, for vengeance of Amphimachus,
Wrathful, the fleetfoot Ajax shore the head,
And sent it, ball-like, whirling through the throng,
Till in the dust it dropp'd at Hector's feet.

But when Poseidon saw Amphimachus,
His son's son, fall, he wax'd in wrath, and straight

'Gan range throughout Achaia's camp and fleet,
Quickening the Danaans, working woe to Troy.
Whose path the brave Idomeneus first cross'd, 240
Leaving a comrade, whom a sharp-tipp'd spear
Had wounded through the elbow, and his men
Had carried from the fray : Idomeneus
Had giv'n the leeches charge, and left the tent,
Hasting, with spirit yearning to the war,
When, with a voice as of Andræmon's son,
Thoas, Ætolia's chieftain (he the king
Of Pleuron and the woods of Calydon,
And honour'd by his people like some God),
The sovran Lord of Ocean spoke, and said : 250
 "Thou Counsellor and crownèd King of Crete !
Idomeneus ! where now the windy threats
Achaia's sons so oft would vent on Troy ?"
 To whom the Cretan King, Idomeneus :
 " So far as I have knowledge, not to man,
Thoas, this blame belongs ; we know the arts
Of war ; faint-hearted fear holds none away ;
Nor any in the battle yields to sloth.
My fear is, peradventure it seems good
To Kronos' Son supreme, that all the host 260
Should perish far from Argos nameless here.
But, Thoas—since of old thou ever lov'dst
The battle, and to chide whom else soe'er
Thou sawest slack—oh, change not from thy wont,
Change not thyself, and cheer all others on."

To whom earth-shaking Poseidaion then :
“ Idomeneus ! may ne’er that man return
Alive from battle home, but fall the food
Of dogs and vultures, who shows wilful-slack
This day against the Trojans. Haste, fetch forth 270
Thy arms, and come ; together let us go ;
Two men together, we may well work good ;
Strength is in union, though of common men ;
And we avail to battle with the best.”
So ceased the God, and through the mail pass’d on.

But when Idomeneus had gain’d his tent,
He girt his form in mail, and took two spears,
And, issuing forth, appear’d, as levin bolt
Grasp’d by Kroneion on the glittering height
Of steep Olympus, and thence hurl’d a sign 280
To mortal men, who watch the flash afar ;
Thus shining in his brazen mail he show’d.

Whose path Meriones, his follower brave,
Cross’d near the tent, whither he made his way
To fetch a second spear ; to whom the might
Of old Idomeneus began address :

“ Dearest of all my comrades, quick of foot
And strong of hand, my own Meriones !
Why com’st thou thus and leav’st the deadly fray ?
Hast thou a wound ? and wears the dart thy strength ?
Or com’st thou on some errand unto me ? 291

But I not more desire than thou to wait
Longer among the galleys, but to war."

And thus Meriones replied discreet :
" Sage guardian of the mailèd Cretan host,
Idomeneus ! If thou hast haply left
A spear within thy tent, I come to seek ;
For that which late I held I lost but now,
Snapp'd on the buckler of Deïphobus."

To whom the Cretan King Idomeneus: 300
" One spear or twenty, if thou list, thou'lt find,
Standing against the side that fronts the light
Within my tent—the trophies oft I win
From vanquish'd Trojans ; not of those am I
Who battle at safe distance from their foes :
And therefore spears have I, and bright-boss'd shields,
Helmets and corslets laughing in the sun."

And thus Meriones replied discreet :
" In my tent also and aboard my ship 310
Such spoil in plenty lies, but far to fetch.
For I too am not mindless of brave deed ;
But ever is my station in the front,
There, where is glory to a man, in fight,
At the first sound of onset ringing loud.
Others perchance throughout this mailèd host
Perceive not, but, I ween, thou know'st this well."

To whom the Cretan King, Idomeneus :
" I know thy valour, what thou art ; no need
For thee to tell the tale ; for were we all,

The bravest of the host aboard the fleet, 320
Gather'd into an ambush, where of men
The stuff is best discern'd—for there most clear
The coward and the hero show reveal'd :
The colour of the coward comes and goes,
Nor will his heart allow him tranquil seat ;
He shifts his limbs, and crouches on his hams,
The pulses of his heart beat fast and loud,
And his teeth chatter, for he dreads the Fates :
But let the brave man once take seat therein,
Nor his cheeks change, nor fears he overmuch ; 330
Soon to be up and doing, all his prayer :—
So, wert thou then amongst us, well I wot
None could deem lightly of thy heart or arm.
And, if a sword should smite, or javelin wound,
Not on the nape nor on the back it falls,
But on the breast and in an onward charge
Meets thee a champion constant to the van.
But haste, nor let us prate, like children, more,
Lest peradventure we provoke reproach ;
Quick to the tent, and fetch a second spear.” 340
He spoke ; the other, Ares-like in arms,
Quick from the tent brought forth a brazen lance
And follow'd, eager to the work of war.

Such as to battle murderous Ares moves,
And in his steps Terror, his son beloved,
Fierce, fearless, on whose face no wight of earth,

Be he the bravest born, may look unscared :
From Thrace to aid the Ephyri they come,
Or for the valiant Phlegians, girt in arms ;
But hearken not the prayers of both brave hosts, 350
And will the victory to which they list ;
Such seem'd those chieftains moving to the war,
Idomeneus, and bold Meriones,
Array'd in flashing harness, head to foot.
Of whom Meriones began address :

“Where wouldst thou, noble Son of Deucalus,
Mix with the throng? Amongst the midmost ranks?
On the right wing? or on the left array?
To me appeareth no such pressing need
Elsewhere throughout the host as on the left.” 360

To whom the Cretan King, Idomeneus :
“And with the central ships are those at hand
Who well may save them ; there the Ajax-two,
And Teucer, best of bowmen in the host,
Nor in close combat less good man-at-arms :
How keen and strong soe'er be Priam's Son,
These will suffice to glut him with the war,
And, let his ardour be whate'er it may,
Their mighty strength he will not bring so low
As burning of our galleys—so but Zeus 370
Cast not himself the flaming brand amongst them.
To none of mortal race, to none who eat
The fruits of earth, to none whom spear can pierce,
Or sword can wound, or monstrous stone can crush,

Will Telamonian Ajax yield in arms :
Not ev'n to dread Achilles need he yield
In standing fight, though slower far of foot.
Then let us to the left, and learn, if there
We conquer, or bestow, renown this day."

He spoke, and led the way, Meriones, 380
The peer of murderous Ares, following close,
Till both had gain'd the side whereto he bade.
The foe beheld him flamelike in his march,
Him and his follower glittering' each in arms,
And shouting through their throng bore down upon him,
Till at the galleys' sterns the fight was stay'd.

As when before the stress of whistling winds
The dust-storms gather, on a day when dust
Lies thickest on the paths, in one huge cloud
They rear it up, dense-gather'd ; so their ranks 390
Closed ; and their hearts throbb'd furious through their
throng,

Each with sharp steel the other to destroy.
Bristled with spears erect from slaughterous hands
The deadly battle ; and the eye was dazed
With the bright brazen gleam of radiant helms,
White-polish'd corslets, and far-glittering shields,
Thronging together ; dauntless were the man,
And iron-hearted, who could gaze and joy
Without compassion o'er that deadly stowre.

For now with diverse will the two great Sons 400
Of Father Kronos shower'd most sore distress
Upon those heroes' heads to either side.
Zeus for the glory of Achilles will'd
To Hector all the victory of this day,
Yet doom'd not that Achaia's host should fall
In Ilion's leaguer utterly destroy'd,
But did this grace to Thetis and her son.
Wherefore most vehemently wroth 'gainst Zeus,
Grudging that slaughter to the arms of Troy,
Poseidon, mounting from the hoary deep, 410
Unseen, and mingling with the Argive host
In secret guise, bestirr'd them to the war.
Both of the selfsame stock and father came,
But Zeus the wiser and the elder-born ;
Therefore the other shunn'd to give his aid
In open day, but secret moved, and guised
In form of mortal, kindling to the fray.
And long those two, with strength alternate, strain'd
At either end drawn even 'twixt the hosts
A cord, insoluble, inviolate, 420
Of endless battle, laying many low.

Calling upon his men, Idomeneus
Sprang foremost, and, though grizzled now his locks,
Made fear amongst the Trojans, striking down
Othryoneus, who dwelt in Priam's house,
But from Cabesus late had come, to seek

Glory in war, and ask'd in wedlock there
The fairest of the daughters of the king,
Cassandra ; nor made proffer of a dower,
But of a doughty deed, to drive in arms 430
Achaia's leaguer, force-perforce, from Troy ;
And brave he fought for hope of that fair prize.
But at him famed Idomeneus now aim'd
His shining spear, nor err'd, but, as he stalk'd
With haughty step, struck down ; nor then avail'd
The brazen corslet, his long-wonted guard,
But, through the navel pierced, he fell ; his arms
Clash'd loud ; and, o'er him vaunting, thus his foe :

“ Myself, Othryoneus, will cry thy name
Above all mortals else, if thou fulfil 440
Thy pact with Dardan Priam—all thou then
Vauntedst, but he betroth'd his own dear child ;
Nay, take this surer promise now from us :
To Troy from Argos we will vow to bring
The fairest of the house of Atreus' Son
To wed with thee, if thou with us wilt join
In battle for the fall of Ilion's towers.
Arise then, follow to our swift black barks,
There to debate this marriage and the terms ;
Thou wilt not find us niggards in the dower.” 450

Speaking, the hero trail'd him by the foot
Along the battle-line ; but tow'rd him came
For vengeance, moving in his chariot's front,
Asius, to whom his driver held his steeds

Close, that their breath was hot upon his back :
And keen his heart against Idomeneus ;
Who yet forstall'd him, piercing in the throat
Under the chin, and drave the point right through.
He fell, as falls an ash, or poplar pale,
Or tallgrown pine, upon the mountains hewn 460
By woodman, to be shaped some vessel's plank ;
So he, before his steeds and chariot strewn,
Groaning his last, in dust and blood lay soil'd :
Whose driver, all aghast, lost such poor wit
As erst he had, nor found the heart to turn
His steeds to flight, or from his foes escape,
But fell, hard-stricken by Antilochus,
Pierced through the middle ; nor the corslet 'vail'd
To save, but through the belly pass'd the spear ;
Gasping, from off the well-wrought car he dropp'd ; 470
And noble Nestor's son Antilochus
Exultant drave those horses to the fleet.

Much moved for Asius' sake, Deïphobus
Drew very nigh to brave Idomeneus,
And hurl'd a shining spear ; Idomeneus
Saw and escaped it, crouching, all conceal'd
Behind the orb'd buckler that he bare,
Compact of tough bullhides and flashing brass,
Rounded, and wielded by two rods within ;
Behind this close he gather'd all his form, 480
And o'er it flew the brazen lance ; yet dry

The buckler rang, as o'er its edge the spear
Pass'd, grating ; nor in vain the shaft was sped,
But struck Hypsenor, son of Hippasus,
A chieftain of the people, through the heart,
And loosed the limbs beneath him ; whereupon
The other thus, vainglorious and loud :

“ Not unrevenged lies Asius ; yea, albeit
He pass the gates by mighty Hades seal'd,
I ween, his haughty spirit yet shall joy, 490
Beholding there whom I have sent his guide.”

He spoke ; the Argeians chafing heard the vaunt ;
But most in bold Antilochus he stirr'd
The spirit, who, not therefore of his friend
Mindless, ran round, and cover'd with his shield
The body ; 'neath which shelter stooping down
Noble Alastor, and brave Echius' son,
Mecisteus, his two followers well beloved,
Lifted, and, mourning, bare it to the fleet.

But not for this Idomeneus would slack 500
His spirit's force, but ever striving sought
Or in death's darkness to enshroud some foe,
Or else himself to fall in that defence
Of ruin from Achaia. And first the son
Of Æsyetes, Zeus-sprung chief, by name
Alcathöus—(member of the royal house
Of prince Anchises, wedded to his child
Hippodameia ; whom her parents loved,

Their eldest daughter, with exceeding love,
For that in form and wit and handiwork 510
All of her generation she outpeer'd ;
And therefore had the noblest man through Troy
Espoused her)—him beneath Idomeneus
Poseidon now subdued, and charm'd away
Sight from his eyne, and fetter'd all his limbs ;
So that he could nor flee, nor shun the dart,
But, columnlike, or like some tall-topp'd tree,
Stood motionless, till in the breast he took
The spear of brave Idomeneus : it burst
Round him the coat of brass, that oft had stay'd 520
Death from him, but now shivering round the point
Rang dry ; he dropp'd, the javelin in his heart,
Which with its heavy pants made throb the shaft
Upward, till war's strong spirit spent its force ;
And loud the other with vainglorious vaunt :
 " Value we this aright, Deïphobus,
Three slain for one, a not unmeet revenge ?
Three slain we boast, since thou so boastest one.
Nay, nearer draw, my friend, thine own brave self,
And learn me so the child of Zeus supreme ; 530
For Zeus gat Minos, guard of ancient Crete ;
Minos Deucalion, prince of blameless name ;
Deucalion me, of many cities king
Through the broad isle, and whom my barks have brought
A scourge to thee, thy father, and all Troy."
 He spoke ; Deïphobus had diverse will,

Or to retire and call unto his aid
Some comrade, or to venture singly there.
To whom, thus doubting, this the better seem'd
To seek Æneas. Him he found aloof 540
In rearmost line of battle ; for he still
Maintain'd tow'rd royal Priam sore his grudge
That, though he show'd 'mongst men of prowess chief,
The king esteem'd him not. Deiphobus
Came to his side, and spoke these wing'd words :

“ Æneas, noble counsellor of Troy !
If aught of sorrow for thy sister's spouse
Touch thee, now sore the need to save his corse.
Bestir thee for Alcathoüs—him who oft
Would nurse thee infant in thy father's house, 550
Being thy sister's husband ; he hath fall'n,
Slain by the spear of famed Idomeneus.”

He spoke, and deeply stirr'd the other's heart,
Who straightway on Idomeneus moved fierce,
Fiery, to battle ; but Idomeneus
Quail'd not, like startled child, but stood in arms
Steadfast, as when upon the hills a boar,
Firm in his strength, abides the onset thick
Of a great crowd against him, near a fold
Of bleating sheep ; the bristles o'er his spine 560
Start ; and his eyeballs flash with fire ; he grinds
His teeth, for fury to repel the hunt ;
Thus stood Idomeneus, and bode the charge ;
But looking, call'd his comrades to his side,

Aphreus, Deïpyrus, Ascalaphus,
Meriones, and bold Antilochus,
Lovers of battle ; loud to these he call'd
Enkindling, and address'd his wingèd words :

“ Friends, hither haste, and help, where now I stand
Alone against Æneas ; quick of foot 570
Is he, and much I dread his near approach ;
For strong is he in fight to slay his man,
And his the chiefest strength, the flower of youth.
Yet, were our years, as are our hearts, the same,
Singly betwixt us were the issue tried,
Whether to his great glory or to mine.”

He spoke, and, one in heart, they gather'd all
Round him with bucklers serried in their front.

Then, adverse, tow'rd his friends Æneas look'd
Likewise, and Paris to his side he call'd 580
And brave Agenor and Deïphobus ;
The chieftains these, but legions in their rear
Follow'd : as, after pasture, tow'rd a stream
A flock in multitude behind a ram
Follows ; and with glad heart their shepherd sees ;
So with glad heart Æneas too beheld
Legion on legion answering to his cry.

Soon round Alcathoüs, hand to hand, they closed
With smooth long spears ; and round their breasts the mail
Clang'd, smitten, as throughout the throng they aim'd 590

Each at the other. Two, above the rest,
Two gallant chiefs, to valiant Ares peer,
Show'd ardent most to draw each other's blood,
Æneas and Idomeneus. And first
Æneas threw ; but the other saw, and shunn'd
The brazen lance, which, falling in the earth,
Stood quivering, vainly darted from his hand.
Idomeneus then threw, nor struck his aim,
But through the belly pierced Ænomaüs,
Bursting the corslet's bar ; and through the bowels 600
The point pass'd, griding ; in the dust he dropp'd
Headlong, and ground the earth for agony.
From out whose corse Idomeneus pluck'd back
The shadowing spear, but might not strip the spoil,
The beauteous armour, off him ; for the shower
Of javelins press'd him sore ; nor now the limbs
Were sure beneath him, to recover quick
His own or to avoid another's spear ;
Whose fame was now in stationary fight,
Strong to repel the ruthless hour of death, 610
But foot was slow to bear him from the fray
Retiring. And, as step by step he went,
At him Deïphobus sent shining spear,
But err'd, yet struck Ascalaphus, the son
Of Enyalius ; and the stout lance held
Right through the shoulder ; in the dust he dropp'd
Headlong, and ground the earth for agony.

Nor vast loud-throated Ares then perceived
How his own son had fallen in the fight,
But sate with all the Immortals far withdrawn 620
By will of Zeus upon the Olympian height
Lost in a golden cloud, from war withheld :
Whilst round about his son the battle grew ;
For off his head Deïphobus had rent
The glittering helmet, when Meriones,
The peer of Ares, sprang with spear, and smote
His arm, that from his hand the vizor'd helm
Dropp'd clanging to the ground ; and, falconlike,
Forth-darting pluck'd from out the wounded arm
His stout good lance, and quick withdrew him back 630
Into the ranks ; whilst round the other's waist
Polites, his own brother, clasp'd his arms
And led him from the battle's moil to where
His steeds and driver and enamell'd car
Stood, some short space aloof, outside the fray ;
These bore him, deeply groaning, tow'rd the town,
Fainting, for from his wound the blood gush'd free ;
But still the rest fought on, like flaming fire.

Æneas forward sprang at Aphreus first,
Caletor's son, and struck with sharp-tipp'd spear 640
The throat, aslant towards him, and away
To the other side the head droop'd ; shield and helm
Sway'd with it ; and black death was o'er him shower'd.

Antilochus on Thoön, as he turn'd,
Laid wait, and struck, and shore away the vein
That running up the spine sustains the head ;
All this he shore away ; and prone in dust,
Outstretching tow'rd his comrades either hand,
The other dropp'd ; on whom Antilochus
Sprang, and 'gan off his shoulders strip the arms, 650
Behind his buckler crouching. Round about,
The Trojans, drawing near, oft threw and struck
The broad deep-carven shield, but might not reach
The form within with wound of ruthless spear ;
For the great God of Ocean gave defence
To Nestor's Son, though compass'd round with darts ;
Who never lack'd for enemies, but still
Would turn and seek them, nor held stiff his spear
In idle hand, but quivering in quick grasp
Upbrandish'd ; for his heart was set to slay 660
Whether by javelin or by near assail.

Nor ranged he thus, unmark'd of Adamas,
The son of Asius, who, nigh-charging, struck
Full on the buckler's centre ; yet the God,
Dark-tress'd Poseidon, grudging him the life,
Made blunt the point ; and, like some brand half-burnt,
Half in the buckler stay'd and half to earth
The spear dropp'd down. Then Adamas drew back,
Shunning black Fate, amongst the Trojan ranks ;
But, as he went, Meriones pursued 670

And smote, where Ares falls on wretched men
Most baleful, 'twixt the navel and the groin ;
There drave he in his spear ; and o'er it prone
The other bow'd, and gasp'd, like some strong ox
Slow to a slaughterhouse by cowherds haled,
Perforce, with cords ; so he, downstricken, dropp'd
Gasp'ing for breath ; but short the pain, nor long
Ere brave Meriones was at his side,
Plucking the spear ; then darkness veil'd his eyes.

Next, Helenus with a huge Thracian sword 680
Drew near Deïpyrus and clave his neck
In sunder, shearing off the vizor'd helm,
Which flew far-rolling at the warriors' feet
Astray, and some Achaian bare it home ;
But death came darkling o'er Deïpyrus.

Whereat much-sorrowing, Menelaüs moved,
Brandishing threatening spear, on Helenus
Ev'n as he now 'gan draw his horned bow ;
At the same moment both—the one discharged
His spear, the other from the string his shaft. 690
The arrow from the hand of Priam's Son
Struck on the corslet's rib beside the chest
And off rebounded ; as when dark-husk'd beans
Or pulse from off a winnowing fan broad-spread
Bound driven along a spacious threshing-floor
Neath the sharp gust, and by the winnower's will ;

So off the corslet of the hero flew
The bitter arrow dash'd aslant and far.
But Menelaüs, Atreus' gallant son,
Struck on the hand that held the polish'd bow, 700
And through both hand and bow the lance went driven.
Back to his comrades Helenus, withdrew
Fleeing from Fate, but at his side the hand
Droop'd, trailing at his feet the ashen spear ;
Till brave Agenor drew the weapon forth,
And bound up in a sling of twisted wool
(Borne by the follower of the prince) his hand.

Anon on Atreus' glorious Son bore down
Pisander, hurrying to the bourne of death
By evil doom, and in the direful fray 710
To fall, O Menelaüs, slain by thee !
For each had near'd the other on the field,
When Atreus' Son first threw, but err'd, the spear
Slanted aside ; then full upon the shield
Pisander struck, yet could not pierce it through ;
For the broad buckler stay'd the lance, which fell
Half-broken at the splice ; Pisander's heart
Leapt high for joy and hope of victory won ;
And, whilst Atrides drew his hilted brand
And sprang upon him, 'neath his sheltering shield 720
He got to hand a brazen battle-axe
With olive handle, polish'd bright, and long ;
So each assail'd the other, face to face ;

Pisander on the horseplumed morion's cone
Struck underneath the crest, but on the brow
The other, 'twixt the eyes ; the bone was crack'd
In sunder, and the eyeballs all in blood
Dropp'd on the earth before him ; back he fell,
Bow'd double ; and Atrides, on his chest
Stamping his heel, despoil'd him of his arms, 730
And o'er him spoke his vaunt, and cried aloud :
 " Now haply, now, O Trojans, howsoe'er
Haughty of soul and sateless in the thirst
Of bloody battle, ye will leave perchance
The Danaan ships at peace ! Ye traitorous hounds,
Of shame to me no sparers from the first—
Wronging me, and regardless quite of Him,
Who ruleth caring for the hearths of men,
Zeus, the Avenger ; and who yet shall wreak
Destruction on your city's lofty towers ! 740
Robbers of much my wealth and of my wife,
My wedded wife, what time to you she gave
Fond welcome, and ye ravish'd her away !
And on the top of this would ye aspire
To burn our galleys with your wasting fires
And slaughter all our noblest ? Nay, I ween,
Whate'er your ardour, this will check you back.
O Father Zeus ! They tell how thou excell'st
In wondrous wisdom men and Gods alike ;
And yet 'tis thou who bring'st these things to pass. 750
To men of overweening insolence

What grace thou show'st—these Trojans, whose hot blood
Knows no restraint of reason, nor will e'er
Be satiate with the moil of changeful war.
Of all things else comes sweet satiety ;
Of love, and slumber, and melodious song,
And dance delicious ; things of more delight
And more to be desired than fierce affray ;
Yet Troy will never sate her soul with war."

Speaking, the blameless hero off him stripp'd, 760
And to his comrades gave, the bloodstain'd arms,
Then turn'd, and mingled with the van again.

There first the son of King Pylæmenes,
Harpalion, assailed him : he had come
Following his father to this war with Troy,
But never to his own dear land return'd.
Full on the centre of Atrides' shield
He struck with spear, yet might not pierce it through :
And, whilst he drew him backward to the ranks,
Shunning his fate, and glancing timorously, 770
Lest some sharp javelin strike him from the foe,
Straight at him, as he went, Meriones
Discharged a brass-barb'd arrow ; and it struck
In the right flank ; beneath the spine sheer through
The point pass'd out ; he writhing sate, upheld
In his friends' arms, till, rendering up the ghost,
He dropp'd, like twisting worm, stretch'd flat on earth,
And the black blood made wet the ground about.

Round him the gallant Paphlagonian troop
Gave tendance, and uplifting to his car 780
Bare him to sacred Ilion ; whilst behind
His father follow'd, dropping bitter tears,
Nor gain'd a father's vengeance for his son.

For whose sad death was Paris anger'd most,
For that of all the Paphlagonian tribe
He was his friend ; wroth therefore for his sake,
He sent a brass-barb'd arrow through the host.
Of whom a certain man, Euchenor, fought,
Son of the seer Poleidus, rich and brave,
Who had embark'd and left his wealthy house 790
In Corinth, of his mournful fate forewarn'd ;
To whom the seer his father oft had told
An early death, by fell disease at home
If there he bode, or, if he went to war,
To fall amongst the ships by Trojan hand.
Therefore he went, and 'scaped the heavy mulct
(That else Achaia's chieftains had imposed)
And the loath'd pains of lingering disease.
Him under ear and jaw the arrow struck ;
Swift from his limbs the spirit fled away, 800
And hideous night enwrapp'd his eyes in death.

Thus, like some fiery furnace, raged the war.

But all this while not yet had Hector heard

Nor knew at all, how on the battle's left
His host was falling by the Achaian arms,
And victory there inclined to Argos' sons,
(So much Poseidon quicken'd every heart,
Yea, and gave succour with his own strong hand);
But still that hero bode where first he leap'd
Into the breach, and burst the dense array 810
Of shielded Danaans. On that part the ships
Of Ajax and Protesilaüs stood
High from the crested billows up the shore.
The rampart in their front stood, lowest built,
On sunken ground ; and there they press'd the foe
In fiercest mellay, men and steeds alike.
For there the Locrian and the Phthian troop,
The far-renown'd Epeians, and the band
Bœotian, and the Ionian long-robed ranks
Of Athens, stay'd the onset from the fleet ; 820
Yet could not so repel their noble foe,
Hector, like flame infuriate. First in front
The Athenians stood, commanded by the son
Of Peteus, brave Menestheus ; by whose side
Pheidias, and Stychius, and huge Bias, led :
Meges, and Drachius, and Amphion, there
Headed the Epcians : in the Phthian van
Stood Medon, and Podarces, flower of war ;
Medon, the bastard son of Oileus,
Brother of royal Ajax, but afar 830
Dwelling in Phylace, by guilt of blood

Exiled from Locris ; for he there had slain
The son of Iphiclus, Phylacides,
A kinsman of his godlike father's wife ;
These were the chieftains who in arms complete
Vanmost of all the valiant Phthians fought
Before the galleys by Bœotia's side.

But fleetfoot Ajax, son of Oïleus,
Fast unto Telamonian Ajax clave,
Nor left him, though 'twere e'er so little space. 840
But as two oxen, darkly hued like wine,
One in their ardour, draw a well-join'd plough
Across a fallow land ; below their horns
Sweat in thick drops stands gathering ; and they strain
Along the furrow, sever'd by the breadth
Of the yoke only, ploughing up the field ;
So either Ajax, moving side by side,
Each close to the other fought. Many and brave
The followers of the Son of Telamon,
Who would relieve him of his shield, if e'er 850
Fatigue and sweat fell heavy on his limbs.
But to the valiant Son of Oïleus
The Locrians durst not come ; to close affray
Their hearts were not enured ; nor orbèd shields,
Nor horseplumed brazen helms, nor ashen spears
Were theirs : but they had come to Ilion's walls
Trusting their bows and slings of tight-twined wool ;
Wherewith they now pour'd down a ceaseless shower,

Breaking the Trojan line ; in mail of proof
Their chieftains battled in their front, but they, 860
So shelter'd, from the rear pour'd still their darts,
Till Troy 'gan lose her ardour in the fight,
Wavering beneath the arrows' endless shower.

Then had the Trojans made laborious flight
To wind-swept Ilion from the camp and fleet,
But near to Hector's side Polydamas
Took stand, and thus address'd his wingèd words :
" Hector, too stubborn to advice art thou.
Thinkst thou, because thou hast pre-eminence
Of strength to war on thee bestow'd by heaven, 870
In council therefore thou must needs excel ?
Nay, verily ; thou wilt not 'vail to take
All knowledge to thyself. As Heav'n to one
Gives strength in war, but to another grants
Grace in the dance, and to a third the power
Of harp and song melodious, so a fourth
Hath in his breast implanted by great Zeus
The excellent gift of wisdom ; many men
Reap good thereof, and States are saved thereby,
But none hath richer harvest than himself. 880
So hear me, what now seemeth to me best.
Battle enrings thee as with flaming fire ;
And since they storm'd the bulwark o'er the trench,
The gallant Trojans either stand aloof
Waiting in arms, or still are struggling on,
[11] D

Few against many, scatter'd through the ships.
Therefore retire awhile, and hither call
The noblest chieftains, hence to take survey,
Whether to charge in onset 'midst their barks,
Should Heav'n vouchsafe to us such mastery, 890
Or to withdraw, if need be, still unharm'd.
Myself I dread, lest soon Achaia's host
Meter back with ample usury their debt
Of yester-eve ; whose chiefest hero still
Abides unroused, unsated of affray—
Who will not alway hold him thus aloof."

He ceased ; his rede, of evil issue clear,
Seem'd good to Hector, who full-arm'd to earth •
Leapt down, and thus return'd his wing'd words :
" Therefore, Polydamas, remain thyself 900
To stay the chieftains, whilst I yonder pass
To call them thence, and face the battle's brunt ;
Thereafter I will haste me back forthwith."

He spoke, and moved away, and show'd in arms
Like some snow-crested mountain ; loud he raised
His cry, and to and fro amongst the ranks
Flew, ordering ; and whoe'er received his hest,
Made tow'rd the side of brave Polydamas :
Whilst he still sought the champions of the van,
If haply he might find Deïphobus, 910
Or the vast strength of princely Helenus,
Asius, or Adamas, great Asius' son ;
Not scathless, not unvisited by death,

He found them, but beside the galleys some
Reft of their lives by hands of Argives lay,
And some within the city wounded sore.
But on the mournful battle's left extreme
He came on Paris, lovely Helen's lord,
Kindling, bestirring, to the war his men,
Drew near him, and upbraiding chode him thus : 920

“ Foul-omen'd Paris ! fair in form alone !
Infatuate, soft beguiler of fond girls !
Where is Deïphobus ? And where the might
Of royal Helenus ? And Asius' Son ?
And Asius, son of noble Hyrtacus ?
And where Othryoneus ? Alas, this day
Ilion hath toppled headlong from her height,
Yea, utter ruin now must surely come.”

Whom godlike Alexander answer'd thus :
“ Hector, thou blam'st me, where no blame is due. 930
Albeit perchance at other whiles I seem
To lag in battle, yet my mother bare
Her son no common craven ; and, since here
Amongst the galleys thou hast pitch'd the war,
We on this part have battled, hand to hand,
Unresting, respiteless, against the foe.
But they of whom thou askest, all have fall'n,
Only the might of royal Helenus,
And brave Deïphobus, survive, and both,
Wounded with javelins through the hand, have gone, 940
But Zeus hath saved their lives. Lead therefore thou,

Whither thy heart and spirit prompt thee on ;
We will be near behind thee undismay'd,
Nor blench, so far as in us lies the strength ;
For, howsoe'er the spirit burn to war,
No man can pass the measure of his strength."

The hero spoke, and won his brother's heart :
And thither made they way, where now the fight
Raged hottest, round the brave Polydamas,
Phalias, Orthæus, and Cebriones, 950
And godlike Polyphetes, and the sons
Of King Hippotion, Morus, Ascanus,
And Palmys, who had join'd the yestermorn
Relief from rich Ascania ; these now stood
Together, rallied to the war by Zeus.

And on they went, like some dense-gathering storm
Of violent winds that come with thunder-clap
From Father Zeus upon the earth, and fall
Tumultuous, as they mingle with the deep,
Whereon a thousand billows rise, upcurl'd, 960
White-crested, spattering off their heads the foam,
Along the echoing ocean, line on line,
First these, then others ; so in war-array,
First these, then others, with their leaders came
The Trojan troops ; whom Hector, Priam's son,
Led first, nor less than slaughterous Ares seem'd,
With full-orb'd buckler, in his front out-thrust,
Of hides compact, but boss'd with brazen studs,

And the bright morion nodding round his brows.
Such show'd he, striding round Achaia's ranks; 970
Sheltering each step, if haply they would yield ;
But might not so confound their fearless hearts ;
And Ajax forward strode, and challenged loud :

“ Draw nearer, friend ! why fright'st thou Argos' sons
Thus vainly ? Though the evil scourge of Zeus
This day subdues us, not so all untrain'd
Are we, that merest show should fright us back.
Thy soul aspires, I ween, to burn our ships ;
Our arms are strong as thine, to guard them still.
Rather shall your rich city perish first, 980
Under our conquering arms despoil'd and strewn.
And to thine own proud self I give this rede :
The hour is near when thou in flight shalt call
On Zeus and all the Powers of Heav'n to lend
Wings to your glossy horses, swift as hawks,
To bear you home, dust-clouded o'er the plain.”

And, as he spoke, a soaring eagle flew
On the right hand above him ; all the host
Acclaim'd, exultant in the sign ; but thus
Hector, the hero of the glancing helm : 990

“ Thou gross injurious braggart, wide of truth !
What saying this ? For would I were begot
Of mighty Zeus to everlasting life,
The child of royal Herè, and adored
As Phœbus and Athenè are in heaven,
As surely as this day brings evil plight

On all Argeians—and on thee not least,
If thou dar'st wait my javelin ! I will rend
Thy lily skin, and leave thy dainty flesh
Fattening the vultures and the dogs of Troy, 1000
Where thou shalt fall, downstricken 'mid the fleet."

He spoke, and led the way, with whom advanced
With terrible shout the chieftains, and, behind,
Their legions, cheering ; but the ranks adverse
Of Argos stood, not mindless of their might,
And answer'd cheer for cheer, and steadfast bode
Troy's best and bravest : and the sound went up
To the empyreän and the rays of heaven.

Iliad XIX

NOR Nestor in the tent, though drinking wine,
Mark'd not the cry of battle louder borne,
But rose, and thus addressed Asclepius' Son ;
 " Heed'st thou the sound, Machaon ? To my ears
The cry comes louder from the camp and fleet :
Remain thou still, and drink this glowing wine,
Till Hecamedè, handmaid of my tent,
With heated waters cleanse from off thy wound
The clotted blood ; but I must quickly forth
To some high place, gaze round me, and know all. 10

 Speaking, he raised the shield of Thrasymed
His son (for Thrasymed had ta'en his sire's),
Embossed with glittering brass ; brass-tipp'd and strong
A lance he likewise took, and stood in arms
Without the tent ; and thence beheld, and knew
The shameful rout—the Argeians now in flight,
And the haught Trojans thronging on their heels,
And all Achaia's rampart burst and strewn.
And, as the sea, in one dumb heaving wave,
Foreshadowing sudden passage of shrill winds 20
Stands, purpling, nor is roll'd to either side,

Till down the blast hath come inclined from heaven ;
So sway'd the Elder, and his heart was cleft
In sunder, or to turn him to the war,
Or to Atrides, shepherd of the host.
To whom, thus doubting, this the better seem'd,
To turn and seek Atrides. They, meantime,
Fought on, each slaughtering each ; and steel unfray'd
Beat clashing on the breast of mailèd men,
Dinted with swords and pointed spikèd spears. 30

Tow'rd Nestor meeting came the heav'nsprung chiefs,
Tydides, Odysseus, and Atreus' Son,
The wounded three, now moving from their ships.
For many barks along that white sea-shore
Were ranged at distance from the battle-field ;
Out to the plain the foremost stretch'd, and there
The rampart hard upon their sterns was rear'd ;
Nor thus the breadth of shingle could contain
Their number, but the host had straiten'd room ;
Hence, step by step, they ranged them, ladder-like, 40
Filling the inlet long of all that coast,
'Twixt the two promontories, either side.
Therefore together, leaning on their spears,
The three came forth, desiring whence to view
The battle, though their hearts were sore with pain.
And thus the Elder met them ; all who saw
Felt their pulse throb the quicker ; whilst the king
Atrides Agamemnon spake and said :

“O Nestor, Neleus’ son, our nation’s boast !
Why com’st thou thus, and leav’st the deadly fray ? 50
Truly I fear lest Hector in his pride
Fulfil the threats he threaten’d loud in Troy,
Never to wind-swept Ilion to return,
Ere he had burnt our ships and slain the crews.
Yea, this will surely now be brought to pass :
For, verily, not less than Peleus’ Son,
Hath every gallant warrior through the host
Nursed up a grudge against me, and is loth
To battle, though it be to save his bark.”

To whom Gerenè’s chief made answer thus : 60
“This that thou sayest hath pass’d, and o’er the past
Not Zeus the Thunderer in heaven hath power
To turn it from its course. Behold the wall,
The boasted bulwark of our ships and lives,
Wherein we trusted, burst and strewn to earth ;
Whilst hard upon our arrowy ships the foe
Maintains a ceaseless and unending fight.
Nor couldst thou, though with keenest ken, discern
Who be the victors, who the vanquish’d, there ;
So throng’d they fall, and mingled raise the cry. 70
Remains for us to hold our best debate,
If counsel may do aught ; for to the fray
I bid ye not ; the wounded may not fight.”

To whom the King made answer thus, and said :
“ Since, Nestor, at our galleys’ sterns the foe,
Nor aught the wall hath ’vail’d, nor aught the trench

(For there was heaviest loss, albeit we hoped
Therein the bulwark of our ships and lives),
I ween that Zeus hath will'd Achaia's sons
Must perish far from Argos nameless here : 80
Full well I knew what time his help was ours,
As now I know that he vouchsafes our foes
A glory that exalts them to the strain
Of blissful Gods, but fetters all our might.
Hear therefore, and obey as I enjoin.
The hindmost galleys, nighest to the sea,
These launch forth now upon the sacred deep,
Yet make them fast to moorings still ashore,
Till night ambrosial fall, if haply night
Will stay the Trojans from their fierce assail : 90
Then be the whole fleet launchèd out to sea.
What shame to flee from ruin, though by night ?
Better ev'n thus to flee, than captives fall."
Sternly Odysseus frown'd and made reply :
" Say'st thou, Atrides ! what new saying this
Hath slipp'd the ivory portal of thy teeth ?
Most evil Chief ! I tell thee, would to Heaven
Thou wert the captain of some sorry crew
Nor rulèdst us—to whom, 'twould nathless seem,
Zeus hath ordain'd that from our youth to age 100
We must spin on, till every man hath died,
This endless thread of battle and distress !
Was this thy word, to leave broad-streeted Troy
Standing, and all our sorrows unavenged ?

Oh, tell it not abroad, lest others hear
Such counsel, which no chief should e'er have given
Who knew the words of wisdom, or who ruled,
A sceptred King o'er nations of renown,
Like these o'er whom in Argos thou hast sway.
I blame thee openly, without restraint, 110
For this thy rede, who bidd'st us, whilst the war
Hedgeth us round, and in our ears the cry,
To launch our benchèd galleys out to sea :
'Twould be to bring to pass the hopes of Troy,
And draw destruction quicker on our heads.
For surely, when the Achaïans saw their ships
Now thrusting out, they must perforce cast back
Their longing eyes and slacken in the fight.
Yea, sovran chieftain, though 'twere only this,
Thee to condemn this only would suffice." 120

To whom the King made answer thus, and said :
" Severe thou speak'st, Odysseus, and on me
Reflectest more than due, who counsell'd not
Achaïa's sons, if loth at all, to launch ;
Rather let any, be he young or old,
Give better counsel, welcome most to me."

Then freely spoke Tydides 'mongst them all :
" And one is nigh to give it, whom if ye
Will hearken, long we shall not linger here.
Nor cast my youth, I pray you, in my teeth ; 130
For from a noble sire I draw my birth,
Ev'n Tydeus, whom his tomb now holds in Thebes.

Pentheus begat three valiant sons, who dwelt
In Pleuron and the woods of Calydon,
Argius and Melas, two, but Æneus, third,
The father of my father, famed in arms :
He lived and died in Pleuron, but his son,
Banish'd by will of Zeus, to Argos came,
Where of the daughters of Adrastus' house
He took his wife, and with him dwelt, renown'd 140
And wealthy ; plenteous fields of waving corn
Were his, and many rows of vines about,
Large flocks and herds ; nor better spearman lived
In Argos : this ye need not me to vouch.
Wherefore, what well I speak, ye may not slur
By charge of poor dishonourable birth.
We must to battle forth, despite our wounds ;
Yet, lest we haply so add hurt to hurt,
Beyond the fray take stand, and clear of darts ;
Thence quicken these, whose hearts are slack and faint."
He spoke ; nor loth they listen'd and obey'd 151
And moved ; and Agamemnon led the way.

Nor then for nought his watch Poseidon held,
But, following in the guise of agèd man,
Took by the hand, and quicken'd thus the King :
" Now leaps the murderous heart of Peleus' Son
For joy within him, that he vengeful sees
The slaughter and the rout of thy brave host.
Nay, let him to the ruin doom'd by Heaven ;

He hath no knowledge in him—not a gleam. 160
For not with thee the blissful Gods are wroth ;
And soon the princes and the chiefs of Troy
O'er yonder plain shall raise the clouding dust
Fleeing, and thine own self shalt see their flight."

He spoke, and charging shouted loud, as when
Nine thousand or ten thousand men of war
Uplift their voices in the shock of arms ;
So loud the voice the sovran Ocean-God
Gave from his throat, and breathed on Argos' sons
A giant strength, to endless battle fain. 170

And golden-thronèd Herè view'd their plight
From off the Olympian pillar, where she stood,
And joy'd, beholding in the ennobling strife
Her own and husband's brother ranging free ;
Thence turn'd her gaze, and on the topmost peak
Of many-fountain'd Ida spied her Lord
Still sitting ; and she loathed him in her heart.
Therefore the broad-brow'd Goddess 'gan revolve
How best to guile the sense of mighty Zeus.
This show'd the wisest counsel to her mind ; 180
To go to Ida, in her fairest deck'd,
There haply to beguile him to her side,
To lie with her, and then upon his lids
And sense and soul to shower a painless sleep.
She sought the chamber therefore, to her bed
Built by her son Hephæstus, who had raised

Thick portals to its posts, which moved to key
Unknown ; no other God e'er oped that door.
She enter'd and she closed the shining valves.
There first she cleansed of every taint and spot 190
Her lovely form in pure ambrosial stream ;
And 'nointed her with oil, divinely sweet,
Rich, fragrant ; as she shower'd it o'er her limbs
Deep in Zeus' brass-paved mansion, floated forth
The odorous breath thereof through earth and heaven.
Thereafter, and with hair disparted smooth,
About her heavenly brows she wound long locks ;
And clothed her in ambrosial delicate robe,
Wrought with embroidery by Athenè's hand,
And broach'd it o'er her breasts with clasps of gold ; 200
With girdle of a hundred-tassell'd fringe
She girded it, and through her piercèd ears
Drew ear-rings, triple-gemmed, of precious work :
Far off their glory glitter'd round the queen ;
Who from her head then veil'd her in thin veil,
White, and its whiteness shone as shines the sun,
And bound rich sandals 'neath her glistening feet.
So, having deck'd her in a rich array,
She issued from the chamber, and she call'd
Fair Aphroditè to a place apart, 210
Where no God else might list them, and she spake :
" My child, wilt grant the boon I now may ask,
Or wilt thou still deny me, for thy wrath
That I befriend the Danaans, thou their foes ? "

And Zeus-sprung Aphroditè made reply :
" O Herè, most revered, and eldest-born,
Daughter of mighty Kronos! Speak thy will ;
My heart is quick to do it, so it be
That which I may, and that which can be done."

And Herè of her guile gave answer thus : 220
" Grant me the loveliness and sweet desire,
Thine own, wherewith thou sway'st to thee all hearts,
Or mortal or immortal. I would go
Far as the limits of the teeming earth,
Ev'n to th' Original of heavenly Gods,
Oceanus, and Tethys, who of old
Cherish'd and loved me well, to them consign'd
By Rhea when wide-glancing Zeus had heap'd
The earth and seas on Kronos' fallen head.
And I would quench the broil, wherewith incensed 230
This many a year they live apart, estranged.
For, should my prayer win way into their hearts,
Should I unite them by old bond again,
They love and honour me for evermore."

To whom the laughter-loving Queen of Love :
" Thee to deny I have nor will nor power,
Who joyest in the spousal of high Zeus."

Speaking, the broider'd zone beneath her breast
She loosed, wherein all charms to win the sense,
Love, dream, and fond discourse, that steals away 240
The wisdom of the wisest, lay enwrought ;
This throwing to her hands, she spake anew :

“ Take therefore, in thy bosom lay this zone ;
Closed in its broidery all witchery lies ;
Thus arm'd, whate'er thy heart's desire may be,
I promise that thou shalt not seek in vain.”

She spoke, and broadbrow'd Herè, smiling, took,
And, smiling, in her bosom laid the zone,
Whilst Aphrodite turn'd her to the hall.

Forth from the pillar o' the Olympian height 250
Sprang then the other; o'er Pieria
She soar'd, and pass'd Æmathia's beauteous vale,
E'en to the snow-crown'd hills that rear their crests,
Highest on earth, high o'er the tribes of Thrace ;
Nor 'lighted on the earth ; from Athos down
Then moved upon the waters to the isle
Of Lemnos, realm of Thoas, chief divine.
There, Death's twin-brother, Sleep, she seeking found,
Clung to his hand, and spoke his name, and said :

“ O'er God and man all-powerful, sovran Sleep ! 260
If ever thou hast heard me, hear me now ;
And all my days shall I with grateful heart
Acknowledge this thy grace. In slumber steep,
When soon I lie beside him, 'neath their lids
The shining eyes of Zeus ; vouchsafe me this ;
And I on thee bestow a throne of gold,
Beauteous, and incorruptible, and built
By halt Hephæstus : he shall frame the step,
Whereon thou mayst recline thy feet at feast.”

She spoke ; but gentle Sleep made answer thus : 270
" O Herè most revered, and eldest born,
Daughter of mighty Kronos ! Easy task
'Twere to lull other of Immortal Gods,
Yea, ev'n the ancient Father of the rest,
Old Ocean 'mid his streams, by slumber's charm :
But Zeus, great Zeus—nigh him I venture not,
Nor seal his eyes save at his own high hest.
For erst I ventured, soon recall'd to sense
By lesson stern ; then when his haughtiest son
Set sail from Ilion and from conquer'd Troy. 280
Then shower'd I mine own self in gentlest cloud
Round Zeus, and still'd his mind : whilst thou, belike,
Of some deep-hidden malice stirrest up
A storm of evil winds upon the deep,
Which drave his favour'd son from off his bent,
And far from all his crew, to Coös' isle.
But Zeus awoke, and on his waking rose
Wrathful, and to and fro, whome'er he reach'd,
He hurl'd the Gods, but of them all he sought
Me mainly, and I doubt not would have overwhelm'd 290
For ever in the abyss ; but I escaped
Into the lap of Night impregnable,
Who saved me ; for, howe'er his wrath might burn,
He yet had awe of Night, nor cross'd her will.
To such dire fate thou riskest me again."

But royal broadbrow'd Herè thus rejoind :

" What foolishness, O Sleep, hath left thy lips !

But when the oath was utter'd to its close,
Together wrapp'd in mist, the twain went forth
Apace with nimble foot ; nor left the waves 320
Ere they set sole on Lectus, at the cape
Of Ida, mother of all beasts of prey.

There first they skimm'd the land, and 'neath their feet
The summits of the piny forest shook.
But Sleep, ere Zeus espied, ensconced him there,
Perch'd on a lofty fir, that tallest grew
On Ida, piercing through earth's mists to heav'n.
There couch'd he, cover'd in with matted boughs,
In likeness of the clear-voiced mountain-bird,
Of Gods cleped Chalcis, but of men the hawk. 330

But Herè with light foot ascended high
To Gargarus the mountain's topmost peak ;
Whom Zeus beheld approaching ; and such love
Came clouding o'er his mind, as when of old
For the first time they laid them side by side
Embracing, and beguiled their parents' watch.
Before her face he stood, and spake, and said :
"Whither, my Herè, and with what desire
Descend'st thou from Olympus ? I behold
Nor steeds nor chariot to convey thee back." 340

Whom broadbrow'd Herè answer'd of her guile :
"Far to the limits of the teeming Earth,
Ev'n to the Original of heavenly Gods,
Oceanus, and Tethys, I would speed.
Of old they cherish'd me within their halls :
And I would quench the broil, wherewith incensed
This many a year they live apart, estranged.
My horses, that shall post o'er land and sea,
Stand upon many-fountain'd Ida's root.

But hither on my path for thee I turn'd 350
Descending from Olympus, lest perchance
In aftertimes thy high displeasure burn,
For that in silence, mute to thee, I roved
To old Oceanus' far river-home."

But answer made the Ruler of the clouds :
" Hereafter, Herè, journey where thou list ;
But now come hither ; lay thee by my side.
For ne'er till now hath such desire inflamed
For Goddess or for woman my whole heart.
Not such the passion for Ixion's spouse, 360
Who bare to me Pirithoüs, peer of Gods ;
Not such for shapely-ancled Danaë,
Daughter of Acrisus, who thence conceived
Perseus, the marvel of all human kind ;
Not such for that fair virgin far-renown'd,
Daughter of Phœnix, of whose sweet embrace
Minos and godlike Rhadamanthus sprang ;
Not such for Semele ; nor such in Thebes
For her of whom great Hercules was born,
Alcmena ; but fair Semele gave birth 370
To merry Dionysus, man's delight ;
Nor for the Imperial Goddess golden-hair'd
Demeter ; nor for Leto, famed yet more ;
Nay, nor for thine own self ; as this, that now
Inflames me, and sweet passion thrills me through.
Whom broadbrow'd Herè answer'd of her guile ;
" Most dread my Lord ! what falleth from thy lips ?

If now thou bid us each in other's arms
To lie embracing, high on Ida's peak,
Whence all is open to the eyes of all— 380
How will it be, if some immortal God
Descry us sleeping, and straight bear the tale
Throughout all heav'n wide-bruited? Ne'er might I
Rise from that bed, nor move into thy house
Thenceforth ; but I were shamed for evermore.
But, if thou hast this longing at thy heart,
Not distant is the chamber, by our son
Hephæstus built, whereto are closèd doors ;
Thither, if such thy pleasure, we withdraw."

But answer made the Ruler of the clouds : 390
" My Herè, fear not eye of God or man :
So thick a golden cloud will I shower round
About us, that not ev'n the Sun, whose light
Is keenest to espy, through it shall peer."

He spoke, and caught the Goddess to his arms.
Brake forth beneath them from the heavenly sward
Fresh-springing turf, and lily dew-besprent,
And hyacinth, and crocus, flowering thick
And soft and high, and held them from the earth ;
Whilst round them grew a golden cloud, and clung 400
About them, slowly dropping sparkling dew.

So on the peak of Gargarus at peace
Clasping her in his arms the Father lay
By sleep and love subdued ; but gentle Sleep

Quick hied him tow'rd Achaia's fleet, to bear
His errand to Poseidon ; by whose side
He came, and stood, and spoke these wingèd words :

“ Poseidon, now vouchsafe thy strongest help,
And, though it be but for a little space,
Increase the fame to Argos, whilst Zeus lies 410
Fast-bound ; whom I have wrapp'd in softest cloud,
And Herè to her love's embrace hath guiled.”

He spoke, and to the noble race of men
Departing, pass'd away ; but kindled more
The other to the Danaan cause, who sprang
Far forward, and amongst their vanmost cried :

“ Yield we, Argeians, yield we victory
To Priameian Hector—to destroy
Our galleys, and to win immortal name ?
He threats this loud, and vaunts, because he knows 420
Achilles in his ship, for wrath removed.
Yet, if we each would fire the other on,
Him we might lack, nor feel it overmuch.
Hear then, and all obey as I give word ;
Don we the trustiest bucklers in the camp,
With the best gleaming morions guard our heads,
And take the longest lances in our hands ;
Then charge ! Whom I will lead ; nor Priam's Child,
I promise you, shall stand, though brave he be.
And let who hath a spirit to this fight, 430
Yet bears a buckler to his shoulder small,
Changing, on baser man bestow his own.”

He spoke : they heard him gladly, and obey'd ;
Whom their own chieftains marshall'd into rank,
Tydides, Odysseus, and Atreus' Son,
Despite their wounds, and moving through the host
Bade them exchange their harness, each with each.
A proven warrior donn'd a proven mail,
But gave the baser arms to baser man.
So girt in dazzling brass, they rallying went, 440
Whom great Poseidon led, and held a sword,
Gleaming like lightning, of a terrible edge,
In his broad hand ; whom man may not assail
In fearful fray, but all behold appall'd.

Meantime bright-helmèd Hector marshall'd Troy.

Nor long ere, ranged in either's ranks, the two,
Bright Hector, and the dark-tress'd Ocean-God,
Stood to the terrible tug of deadly war ;
Whilst tow'rd the Argeian ships and tents the sea
Surged, and the charging hosts in uproar clash'd. 450
Loud booms a billow dash'd from out the deep
By stress of Northern blast upon a coast ;
And loud the roaring in a mountain-glen
Of flame that leaps to prey upon the woods ;
And loud the howl amid huge-branchèd oaks
Of winds that there rave loudest in their wrath ;
But louder yet the roaring of the war,
Each leaping upon each, with vengeful cry.

Bright Hector first at Ajax aim'd his spear,
For face to face he met ; nor miss'd the spot 460
Where the two belts across the breast are braced,
The shield-belt and the sword-belt ; but the two
Saved him unscathed. Then Hector, groaning wroth
That that swift dart had 'scaped his hand in vain,
Shunning his fate, 'gan rein his horses back ;
But, as he went, the son of Telamon,
Huge Ajax, of the stones that scatter'd lay
Roll'd at the warriors' feet (of mass to be
The moorings to their galleys), lifting one,
Struck him across the railing of his car 470
Hard on the chest and close beneath the neck :
Disc-like he whirl'd it ; with full arc it fell :
And ev'n as by the impelling arm of Zeus
An oak may fall uprooted—dire therefrom
The sulphurous smell upriseth, and so dread
The flash, that all who see disperse appall'd—
Thus fell the might of Hector prone in dust,
Who dropp'd his spear ; his shield and helm were crush'd
Above him ; and his armour rang aloud.
Tow'rd whom Achaia's legions shouting rush'd 480
With hope to gain his body, raining thick
A storm of darts ; yet none might wound the prince
Nor strike him more ; for all the bravest there,
Noble Agenor, and Polydamas,
Æneas, and Sarpedon, Lycia's chief,
And blameless Glaucus, to his front had come ;

Nor these alone ; but all his legions show'd
Most heedful, and before him held a screen
Of orbèd shields, whilst in their hands his men
Uplifting bare him from the moil aloof, 490
To where his swift steeds stood behind the fray—
His steeds, and driver, and enamell'd car ;
These bare him, deeply groaning, tow'rd the town.

But when they gain'd the ford of that brimm'd stream
Xanthus, own offspring of Immortal Zeus,
There from the car they took him to the ground
And shower'd fresh water upon him ; till, anon,
He gain'd his breath and oped his eyes once more ;
He raised himself upon his knee, and stanch'd
The black blood off him, yet again to earth 500
Dropp'd backward, and the darkness clouding came
Around him, for the blow still crush'd his strength.

The Argeians saw great Hector thus withdrawn
And leapt the fiercer on their foes, and set
Their whole hearts to the battle. Foremost far
Sprang Oïliades with pointed spear
And struck the son of CEnops, Satnius ;
Him the fair Naiad Nymph to CEnops bare,
The shepherd, on the banks of Satnoeis ;
Whom spear-renownèd Ajax drawing nigh 510
Struck in the flank ; he backward fell to earth
Whilst round in baleful battle clash'd the hosts.

For vengeance charged Polydamas, and struck
Brave Prothoenor through the shoulder-blade,
The son of Areïlycus ; right through
The javelin held ; in dust he fell, and clutch'd
The earth with clenching palm ; whereat, beyond
All measure boastful, thus Polydamas :

“ Verily, from the mighty arm, I ween,
Of this great son of Panthoüs the spear 520
Never leapt idly, but some Argive foe
Hath borne it in his body driven home,
To help him on his way to Hades' realm !”

He spoke ; the Achaians chafing heard the vaunt ;
In Telamonian Ajax most he stirr'd
Anger, for at his feet the slain had fall'n.
Ev'n as the other went, he sent his spear ;
Yet by a leap aslant Polydamas
Escaped the fate, which on Archilochus,
Antenor's son (doom'd then to evil death) 530
Fell ; for it struck him where the head and neck
Commingle, at the upper end o' the spine.
Both tendons through it shore, and head and face,
Long ere his mail'd limbs, went dash'd to earth.
Then Ajax to Polydamas thus cried :

“ Take thought, Polydamas, and answer true ;
To Prothoenor may not this be match'd ?
No caitiff seems he, nor of caitiffs born ;
Nay, to Antenor's house so like he shows,
Maybe, he is his brother or his son,” 540

He spoke, well knowing : sorrow seized on Troy.

And Acamas before his brother's corse

Advancing struck a brave Bœotian chief

Promachus, who had else withdrawn it off :

And o'er him in vainglorious boast cried loud :

“Boasters insatiate ! Nathless doom'd to ill !

Ye men of Argos ! not on us alone

Falls bloody death ; there are of you who die.

Sound is this slumber of Algenor's son ;

Nor long my brother's blood hath cried in vain 550

For vengeance—yea, with ev'n this hope a man

Prays for a brother to avenge his wrongs.”

He spoke ; th' Argeians sorrow'd o'er the boast ;

But most in warlike Peneleus he stirr'd

The spirit, and on Acamas he charged ;

Who stood not, but retired before his spear.

Then struck he down Ilioneus, the son

Of Phorbas, rich in herds, whom Hermes loved

Most of all Troy, and with great wealth endow'd ;

Ilioneus, his mother's only son ;— 560

But him beneath the eyelash, at the roots

O' the eye he pierced, and thrust the eyeball out,

As through the eye and brain the point pass'd on.

He sate one moment, either hand outstretch'd,

Till Peneleus with sharp-edged falchion drawn

Smote through his neck and lopp'd sheer off to earth

The head—not so dishelm'd, for in the eye

The heavy spear remain'd ; aloft he waved

The head, as 'twere a poppy's head shorn off,
And vaunting to the Trojans cried and said : 570

“Go, Trojans, bid ye both his parents dear—
For brave Ilioneus go bid them raise
The cry of lamentation in their halls.
Thus be the wife of Promachus avenged ;
Albeit she ne'er may greet her lord again,
Algenor's son, returning, when at length
We all aboard our galleys sail from Troy.”

He spoke, and pale the panic held their host ;
And each 'gan cast behind him looks of dread
For place of refuge from the coming death. 580

Now ye, whose homes are on the Olympian steep,
Come ye, O Muses, to my prayer, and sing
Who of Achaia's sons first gain'd him spoil,
When great Poseidon turn'd the tide of war !

First Telamonian Ajax struck the son
Of Gurtius, of the staunch Musæans chief,
Hirtius ; whilst by Antilochus fell slain
Phalces and Mermerus ; and by the spear
Of brave Meriones, Hippotion
And Morus ; and by Teucer, Prothoüs 590
And Periphetes. Atreus' Son, meantime,
Struck Hyperenor, shepherd of his realm,
Deep in the flank, and through the bowels the point
Went, griding ; at the mouthèd wound his ghost

Came hurrying forth, and darkness veil'd his eyes.
But most slew Ajax, son of Oileus ;
For none was swift as he in fell pursuit,
When Heav'n had breathed a panic on the foe.

Iliad ㊦

AND many had fallen by the Danaan sword,
Before the Trojans in that rout repass'd
The stakes and trench, and scarce in rally stood,
All pale with panic, where they left their cars :
But Zeus then woke by gold-throned Herè's side
Upon the peaks of Ida ; to his feet
He started, and beheld the hosts, the one
Now routed, but the Argives on their foes
Charging resistless, by Poseidon led.
He saw too Hector prostrate on the ground ; 10
Whose comrades sate around him ; but he lay,
With hard and painful breath, and vomiting blood,
Fainting—no feeble hand had dealt that blow.
On whom the Father of the world took ruth,
And, with stern frown, to Herè turn'd, and spake :
“Thy craft it is, thy malice unrepress'd,
Disloyal Herè, that hath thus made cease
The noble Hector from the fray, and fill'd
His people with this panic. Scarce I know
But that the first-fruits of this evil guile 20
Shall be thine own to taste, and I once more

Shall lash thee with my stripes. Remember'st not
The day I hung thee far aloft, and bound
About thy feet two anvils, but a chain
Of gold inviolable upon thy hands,
To swing suspended in the clouds mid-air ?
Nor, though the Gods throughout Olympus wax'd
For thee indignant, could they help at all ;
But, one by one, I caught them, and they fell,
Hurl'd headlong o'er the threshold of the sky, 30
Panting to earth : yet not thereby I 'suaged
My grief for Hercules my heavenly son ;
Since Boreas and the other winds were gain'd
Unto thy side, and o'er the barren sea
Thou dravest him, and fulfill'dst thine evil wish,
Till thou hadst brought him into Cos' rich isle ;
Whom, rescued thence, to Argos at the last
I saved, but after heaviest tasks fordome.
Needs must I put this in thy mind again,
To rid thee of this treacherous trick henceforth, 40
And teach thee too how little this false love
Avails thee, wherewithal thou camest from heaven
Alone, and hast beguiled me to thy bed."

He spoke ; and broadbrow'd Herè quaked for fear,
But answer'd thus with wingèd words, and spake ;
" Hear me, O Earth, and ye broad Heavens above,
And Styx below, O Thou the name most dread
And greatest witness to an oath in heaven !
And by thy sacred self I swear, and by

Our own first marriage-bed, whereof the name 50
Think not I ever would invoke in vain :
Not of my prompting hath Poseidon risen
To work this woe to Hector and to Troy,
Or to give succour to the Argive host ;
But his own heart hath urged him thereunto ,
Who look'd and saw the Achaians sore bested,
And had compassion on them in their need.
Yea, mine own self will bid him thence depart
The way, O cloud-wrapp'd Father, thou mayst show."

She spoke ; the Father of the World, well-pleased, 60
Smiled at her words, and spake in answer thus :

" If of a truth hereafter thou wouldst rest,
O royal broadbrow'd Herè, at my side,
And with a mind accordant to mine own,
Soon would Poseidon, whatso'er his will,
Bend his high heart to thy and my desire.
And, if what now thou say'st be truth indeed,
Haste to call hither from the assembled Gods
Iris, and Phœbus of the silver bow ;
And Iris to the mailfrock'd Argive host 70
Shall haste her, to command Poseidon back,
Stay'd from this battle, to his own abode ;
The while Apollo to the war revives
Hector, and breathes him strength renew'd, and heals
The anguish which now racks him through and through,
Then shall he smite Achæa's sons with fear,
Till, routed, on Achilles' barks they fall :

Achilles next shall send Patroclus forth,
To fall at last by Hector, yet to slay
Full many a blooming warrior ere he falls— 80
My son, mine own Sarpedon, with the rest :
Wroth for Patroclus, shall Achilles then
Slay noble Hector. Then, from that day forth,
Ev'n till the Achaians by Athene's help
Take the proud steep of Ilion, unto Troy
Rout I ordain and unredeem'd defeat.
But, till the fall of Hector, and till the prayer
Of Peleus' glorious Son hath been fulfill'd,
Still tow'rd the Danaans I maintain my mood,
Still will forbid all others from their aid ; 90
Ev'n as I gave my word, and with my Nod
Confirm'd it, on the day when Thetis came
And clasp'd my knees, beseeching me vouchsafe
Such honour on her all-destroying Son."

He spoke ; nor Herè disobey'd, but flew
From Ida's mountains to the Olympian steep.
Swift as the leap of fancy in the mind
Of one who much hath travell'd, when he thinks
With nimble apprehending, '*Here I was,*
Or there,' and memories fond crowd fast upon him ; 100
So swiftly wing'd went Herè on her hest,
Traversed so swiftly all the space between,
And gain'd Olympus : on the steep she found
The Immortals gather'd in the hall of Zeus ;
Who saw, and started to their feet, and all

Gave welcome with their cups ; but all she pass'd
Save fair-cheek'd Themis ; from her hand the cup
She accepted, who to meet her first had run,
And who address'd her with these wingèd words :

“ Herè, why comest thou thus like one distraught ? 110
Hath Zeus thy lord inspired thee this affright ?”

And broadbrow'd whitearm'd Herè made reply :
“ Ask me not, heavenly Themis, of these things.
Thyself well knowest his temper, how uncurb'd
And unrelenting. Rather rest content
Here in thy place of honour at the feast.
Though soon ev'n here in this Immortal throng
Thou wilt hear talk of what disastrous deeds
Zeus now portends ; and, certes, when ye hear,
The world will scarce be gladden'd—God or man— 120
If indeed any still can feast content.”

So speaking, royal Herè sate her down,
And the Gods murmur'd through the hall ; but she
Laugh'd with her lips, yet o'er her azure brows
The forehead was not soften'd, till anon
In scorn and indignation she renew'd :

“ Fools, of our folly to be wroth with Zeus !
Or to desire at all to stay his course,
Enforcing or persuading ! He the while
Recks not, but sits secure withdrawn, and knows 130
His power supreme and unapproach'd in heaven.
Bow therefore to your burdens, and endure
The sorrows, whatsoe'er he lays on each.

Already hath the blow on Ares fall'n ;
Yea, he whom bloody Ares names his son,
The man whom most of all mankind he loves,
Ascalaphus, hath perish'd in the war."

She spoke ; but Ares smote his youthful thighs
With hands abandon'd to his grief, and said :

" Now ye, whose homes are on the Olympian steep, 140
Grudge me not that I go to avenge my son,
Though for that cause thereafter doom'd to lie
Scathed with the thunder, stretch'd amongst the slain,
Long ages on this bloody field of death."

He spoke, and call'd to Terror and to Flight
To yoke his steeds, and girt his own bright arms.
And heavier then, and direr far, had wrath
Fall'n from high Zeus in vengeance on the Gods,
Had not Athenè, fearing for their fate,
Hasted her from the threshold through the hall, 150
Leaving the throne whereon she sate, and pluck'd
Shield off his shoulder, helmet off his head,
And planted in the floor the brazen spear
From out his giant hand ; then led him back
Still chafing, and upbraiding spake, and said :

" Insensate ! By this madness quite undone !
Say, hast thou ears to hear, and hearest not,
Or have all mind and honour vanish'd clean ?
Know'st not what tidings white-arm'd Herè brings,
This moment from Olympian Zeus arrived ? 160
Or wouldst thou first fulfil thine own distress,

In anguish and by dire constraint perforce
Returning to Olympus, and thereby
Bring a like ruin upon all in heaven ?
For He would leave these armies then, and come
To smite us to confusion, all alike,
Guilty and guiltless, in one general wrack.
Cease, therefore, cease this anger for thy son :
Full many a man of mightier arm than his
Hath fallen already or will hereafter fall ; 170
It were a task indeed to seek to save
The generation of all human kind."
She spoke, and to his throne thrust the God down.

But Herè call'd Apollo from the hall,
With Iris, who is messenger in heaven,
And spake, and with wing'd words address'd them thus :
" Zeus bids you both haste hence to Ida's height ;
When ye arrive, and look upon his face,
There to perform whate'er his hest may be."

So having spoken, royal Herè turn'd 180
Into the hall again and took her throne ;
Whilst they sprang down, and flew, and gain'd the hill
Of many-fountain'd Ida ; on the peak
Of Gargarus they found great Kronos' Son,
And round him was a cloud of incense wreath'd.
Before the Ruler of the Clouds they stood
Attentive ; nor on them he look'd ill-pleased,
(That they had hasted to obey the word

Of his dear wife), and thus to Iris spake :

“Quick hence, swift Iris ; carry these my words 190
To King Poseidon, nor convey them false.
Say that I bid him from the war withdraw
Into the deep divine, if so he lists,
Or up amongst the assembled Gods in heaven ;
But from the war he needs must straight retire.
If he denies thee, nor will reck my words,
Yet let him weigh it well in heart and mind,
Ere he dares wait my coming ; for, in sooth,
Elder by birth and mightier far in strength,
Strong though he be, I well may ween myself. 200
All others stand in awe of me aloof ;
Him his heart fears not to assert my peer.”

Nor swift windfooted Iris disobey'd ;
From Ida down to Ilion straight she flew ;
Swift as flies hail or snowstorm on the blast
Of sky-born Boreas from the clouds to earth,
So swift flew Iris wing'd upon her hest ;
And to the farfamed Shaker of the World
Drew near, and with wing'd words address'd him thus :
“ O Thou, the Earth-embracer, Azure-hair'd ! 210
Hear me, for with behest from Zeus I come.
He bids thee from the war depart, and go
Into thy deep divine, if so thou list,
Or up amongst the assembled Gods in heaven.
But if thou wilt not hear nor reck his words,
He threats to come and battle, strength to strength,

Against thee ; yet would bid thee rather shun
Thine elder and thy mightier far in arms ;
From whom all other stand aloof in awe,
To him thy heart would dare assert thee peer." 220

But answer all in wrath Poseidon gave :
" Great though he be, yet overmuch he now
Encroaches, if he would constrain me thus,
His peer in honour, by mere might of arm.
All sons of Kronos and of Rheia born
Three brothers were we ; Hades was the third.
In three the world was parted, and to each
Assign'd like share of majesty and place.
Three lots were shaken ; and I drew the sea,
To dwell for ever in its hoary depths ; 230
Hades the far dim islands of the west ;
Zeus the broad heaven in upper air and clouds ;
Earth and Olympus left our common realm.
I move not therefore by the breath of Zeus :
Content within his portion let him dwell ;
Nor with his strength, for all it be so great,
Threat me as in his bondage. Let him chide
The sons and daughters whom himself begat,
With these loud words ;—they needs must brook his w
And, force-perforce, obey ;—but leave me free !" 240

But windfoot Iris answer'd thus, and spake :
" O Thou, the Earth-embracer, Azure-hair'd !
Must I then bear such answer from thy lips,
So harsh and unrelenting, back to Zeus ?

Repent ; repentance is of noble minds.
Also the Furies, as thou knowest, incline
Their hearts with favour to the Elder-born."

Then azure-hair'd Poseidon made reply :
" Wise and discreet, fair Iris, this thy word.
Well fares a message so discreetly borne. 250
Yet to mine inmost soul I feel the sting,
Whene'er he would with angry words suppress
One who in place and honour is his peer.
Howbeit, I bow me to his will this while
Obedient, and depart. But this thing more
Tell him, and from my soul the threat proceeds :
If, against me, and thwarting Here's will,
And Pallas, gatherer of the spoils in war,
And Hermes, and Hephæstus, Kings in heaven,
He spares proud Ilion's towers, nor grants her fall, 260
But takes the mastery from Achaia's sons,
So be it—yet this warning let him weigh ;
The wrath between us two shall ne'er be heal'd."

He spoke, and left the Achaian host, and sank
Into the deep away ; and greatly grieved
Thereat the Danaan heroes. Turning then,
The Ruler of the Clouds to Phœbus spake ;

" Phœbus, my son, to brass-helm'd Hector haste ;
For now within the Ocean-depths divine
The great Enclasper of the Earth hath gone, 270
And shunn'd the encounter of our wrath, well-known
By others erst in battle, ev'n by those

Who circle Kronos in the nether world.
Better for me and better for himself
Hath this thus ended, and hath he withdrawn
In season and in reverence of my might ;
Not without toil had else the day been won.
But take my fringed Ægis in thy hands ;
Shake it abroad, and therewithal affright
The Danaan heroes ; whilst thyself, my son, 280
Tendest on noble Hector. Raise him up ;
Imbreathe thy might within him ; till he drive
The Danaans to their ships and shore repell'd.
Thereafter to restore them in their need,
Some word or work will I myself devise."

He ended : nor Apollo disobey'd
His Father's word, but flew from Ida's height
Like to a falcon swooping on a dove
Swift-wing'd, the swiftest of the fowls of air.
And noble Hector, warlike Priam's son 290
He found now sitting half upright, and prone
No longer, but regathering fast his sense,
Knowing his friends about him ; for the mind
Of mighty Zeus was quickening him anew ;
Whom the Far-smiting Power approach'd, and said :

" Say, Son of Priam, why thou sitt'st aloof
Thus troubled, vainly gasping for thy breath ;
Haply hath fall'n upon thee some distress ?"

And Hector then, with short thick breath, replied :
" Who art thou, Best of heavenly Powers, who com'st 300

And thus inquirest of me face to face ?
Know'st thou not how brave Ajax struck me down
With a huge stone full on the chest, and stay'd
My strength in onset, at the galleys' sterns
Arrived, and slaughtering all around me there ?
Truly I thought to see this very day
The homes of Hades and the dead, so fast
I heard the beatings of my heart within me."

To whom far-smiting Phœbus gave reply :
" Be of good cheer ; so mighty a Helper now 310
From Ida hath Kroneion sent to stand
Close to thy side, and save thee from all harm,
Phœbus Apollo of the golden sword,
Myself, who oft have saved thee, and withal
Thy lofty city. Rouse thee therefore ; bring
The charioteers together ; bid them lash
Their horses straight upon the galleys turn'd,
Whilst, moving in their front, I smooth the path
Before them, and make flee the Danaan host."

He spoke, and on the hero breathed his might. 320
As, when a stallèd horse hath snapp'd his bonds,
Fresh from the manger, pawing earth, and wont
To bathe him in the flowing river near,
He skims the plain, with head uptoss'd, and proud
Prance ; and his mane streams from his shoulder ; while
With sense of his own beauty, swift as wind,
He speeds him to the pastures of the mares ;
So lightly, and with lifted limbs and feet,

Moved Hector to and fro, and call'd the cars
Together, by the voice divine inspired. 330

As village-hunters and their hounds long-while
Press on a wild-goat or an antler'd stag ;
Yet hath a dusky forest or steep rock
Untrodden saved it, nor will Fate allow
To them their quarry ; but the noise hath brought
Sudden a bearded lion on their path,
And, whatsoe'er their ardour, all in fear
He turns them ; so the Danaans for some space
With swords and brass-tipp'd spears press'd bristling on,
But, when they saw great Hector in the van, 340
Shrank back, with hearts that shrank into their feet.

Whom Thoas then, Andræmon's son, address'd,
The bravest of the Ætolians ; whether need
Were for the javelin, or for standing fight,
Alike well-skill'd ; and few in council there
Surpass'd him, when the younger sort engaged
In sage debate : he gave them cheer, and spake :
“ Ye Gods ! A marvel these mine eyes behold.
In resurrection from the arms of Fate
Hector hath risen. Whom truly every heart 350
Had hoped by Telamonian Ajax slain,
Him hath some God deliver'd and upraised.
Of many a Danaan hath he loosed the limbs
Already, and many another now will slay ;

For not, I fear, without the Thunderer's aid
Stands he in this high courage far advanced.
Hear, therefore, and obey ye this my word.
Back on their galleys let the host retire ;
Whilst we, who boast chief prowess in the camp,
Level our lances firm, and steadfast stand 360
In phalanx to repel him, face to face ;
For, let his fury be whate'er it may,
On us so gather'd he will fear to charge."

He spoke ; they gladly hearken'd and obey'd.
Round about Teucer, and Meriones,
The Ajax-twain, the king Idoméneus,
And Meges, peer to Ares—face to face
Opposed to Hector and to Troy, they drew
Their line of battle close, and from all sides
The chiefs united ; but, behind them screen'd, 370
The legions tow'rd the ships began retreat :
Whilst forward in close wedge the Trojans still
Push'd, and with huge strides Hector led them on ;
And in his front Apollo ; and a cloud
Enwrapp'd the shoulders of the God in gloóm,
Yet left in light the Ægis all display'd
Terrible, with its gleaming fringes bright,
Forged by Hephæstus for a gift to Zeus,
His buckler, wherewithal to awe mankind.
This holding, led the God the nations on ; 380
Whom still in firm array their foes opposed ;
And loud from either side the battle-cries ;

And from the strings the arrows sprang ; and thick
The javelins pour'd, and some transpierced the flesh
Of blooming warriors slain ; but in mid space,
Stuck in the earth or e'er they gain'd their mark,
Fell many, quivering for the taste of blood.

Whilst still unshaken Phœbus held the shield,
Darts flew, and warriors fell, to either side ;
But when he lower'd his gaze, and shook the shield 390
Full in the faces of the swift-horsed tribes,
And raised beside his own voice loud thereto,
He charm'd away the valour in their hearts,
And made them clean forgetful of their might.
As is a herd of oxen, or a flock
Of many sheep, when at black dead of night
Two beasts of prey confound them, from the hills
Appearing, and their watcher is not nigh ;
Ev'n so were they confounded, in whose hearts
Apollo breathed dire panic, but to Troy 400
And Hector gave companionship of fame.
Then was the battle scatter'd, man slew man.
By Hector slain Arcesilaus fell,
And Stychius ; *that* the leader of the host
Of mail'd Bœotians, *this* the follower loved
Of great Menestheus. By Æneas fell
Medon and Jasus ; Medon was the son
Bastard of noble Oileus, and hence
Brother to Ajax, but in Phylace

Far from his country banish'd, who had slain 410
The kinsman of his stepdame Eropis,
Whom Oïleus his father had to wife :
But Jasus led the Athenians, and was named
The son of Sphelus, son of Bucolus.
Mecisteus perish'd by Polydamas,
And by Polites in the foremost van
Echius, and Clonius by Agenor's arm ;
Whilst Paris low beneath the shoulder pierced
Deiochus in the back, ev'n as he fled
Before him, and propell'd the spear right through. 420

But, whilst these stripp'd the armour off the slain,
The Achaïans, on the stakes and deepdug trench
Fell stumbling, routed to and fro, and, sore
Constrain'd, repass'd their rampart. Then on Troy
Hector uplifted loud his voice, to charge
Straight on the ships, and leave the spoils awhile ;
“ And whomsoever I espy apart
Or skulking from the galleys, I myself
Will work his death ; nor dead shall he obtain
His burning at the hands of kith and kin, 430
But dogs shall tear his limbs beneath our walls.”

He spoke, and o'er their shoulders lash'd his steeds,
Shouting, and ranging through the Trojan ranks ;
Who answering clamour with clamour drave right on
In more than mortal uproar neck to neck
Their steeds and chariots ; and before them all

Phœbus Apollo moved, and with all ease
Trode down the piled banks' of the trench profound,
Thrusting them to its midst ; and bridged a path
Across it, wide as is a javelin's cast, 440
Thrown by a man in trial of his strength.
Squadron by squadron o'er this path they stream'd
Apollo leading still, and rearing high
The priceless Ægis ; and he strew'd to earth
The rampart with all ease, as when a child
Strews sand upon the sea-shore ; mimic mounds
He heaps in boyish sport, and then again
Confounds them, freely plying foot and hand ;
So Thou, O glorious Phœbus, laidst on earth
Confounded all that toil and labour huge 450
Of Argives, and with panic fill'dst their hearts.

Rallied at last before the ships they stood,
And, each to other giving cheer, pray'd loud
To Heaven with hands uplifted ; Nestor most,
With arms toward the starry sky outstretch'd :
“ O Father Zeus ! If any in Argos' fields
Besought return, and on thine altar burn'd
Fat thighs of sheep and oxen, to whose prayer
Thou hearken'dst and consentedst by thy Nod ;
Now, now remember this, O Lord supreme, 460
And save us, nor permit our deaths by Troy ! ”
So pray'd the Elder, Neleus' Son, and ceased ;
Zeus heard, and loud the thunder peal'd in heaven.

The Trojans knew the mind of Zeus their own,
And leapt the fiercer on their foes, and set
Their whole hearts to the battle. As, by force
Of a strong wind, that to its wont impels
The billows, out upon the broad-spread sea
A climbing wave surmounts a galley's sides,
So o'er the wall the Trojans mounting pour'd 470
With uproar loud, and drave their steeds within,
And waged the battle by the galleys' sterns
With brass-tipp'd lances hand to hand, themselves
Still fighting from their chariots ; but the foe
From the black ships ; whereon they clomb, and plied
The long-spliced poles that lay upon the decks,
Brass-bound, and tipp'd with brass, for naval war.

Meantime, so long as round the rampart raged
The battle 'twixt the hosts and well aloof
Of the swift ships, so long Menœtius' Son 480
Still with the kindly-hearted hero sate,
Eurypilus ; and by his converse sweet
Soothed him, and spread the pain-beguiling balms
With his own hand upon the baleful wound ;
But, when he knew the Trojans o'er the wall
Now pouring, and the Danaans all in rout
And uproar toss'd, he groan'd and smote his thighs,
With hands abandon'd to his grief, and said :
“ Eurypilus, for all thou needst me still,
Yet can I stay no more ; to such a height 490

The war hath risen up yonder. On thy wound
Let thine own servant tend ; but I must haste
Hence to bestir Achilles to the war.

Who knows if, with the sufferance of Heaven,
I may not by persuasion turn his heart ?
Good is persuasion from a true friend's mouth."

Whom, as he ceased, his feet bare fast away.

The while, though firmly still the Achaians bode,
Yet could they not repel from off the ships
The Trojans charging, though the scantier host ; 500
Nor could the Trojans break the Danaan ranks,
Nor pierce them to attain the ships and tents.
But as a plank is planed by rule, and made
Equal on all sides for a galley's use
By some skill'd builder, in all manner of art
Well-taught, and by Athene's mind impell'd ;
So equal and so even the fight remain'd.
Some by one bark, and others by others, fought ;
Hector on glorious Ajax only moved.
Constant those two still struggled round one ship ; 510
Yet nor could Hector drive the other off
Or fire the galley ; nor could Ajax thrust
Brave Hector back, whom Heaven had brought so near.
Yet struck he with a javelin through the chest
Caletor, Clytius' son, in act to fire
The galley ; from his hand the torch dropp'd wide,
And his arms clash'd about him as he fell.

Hector beheld his kinsman thus in dust
Fallen in the front of that black foughen ship,
And loud to Lycia and to Troy appeal'd : 520

“ Lycians, and Trojans, and Dardans, staunch in arms !
Oh flinch not where the fight is straiten'd here ;
Save Clytius' Son, lest he should lose his arms,
Ev'n at the moorings of their galleys fallen.”

He ended, and a glittering javelin aim'd
At Ajax first, yet err'd ; but then struck down
His follower, a Cytherian, Mastor's son,
Lycophron, who with Ajax dwelt, for guilt
Of blood upon him in Cythera's isle.
Where he stood near to Ajax, Hector's lance 530
Struck him upon the head above the ear,
So that from off the galley prone in dust
He dropp'd with limbs all loosen'd. Ajax saw
And shudder'd, and address'd his brother thus :

“ Teucer, my brother ! Mastor's Son hath fall'n,
Our faithful follower, Lycophron, whom both
Have honour'd and regarded in our home
Like our own children, from the time he came
For refuge thither from Cythera's isle.
Him hath great Hector slain. Oh, where the bow 540
And arrows, from Apollo's hand thy gift ?”

He spoke ; whose heart the other read, and ran
Near him, and brought the bow tight-strung, and full
Of shafts the quiver, whence incontinent
He 'gan discharge of arrows on the foe.

And first Pisander's noble son he struck,
Cleitus, the follower brave who held the reins
Of Prince Polydamas, Panthoüs' son,
And on the guidance of the steeds intent
Ranged where the ranks were thickest throng'd, and
thought 550

To do a grace to Hector and to Troy—
Vainly, for evil on him came, which none
Of all who would have saved him could forefend ;
The grievous arrow fell upon his neck,
And from the seat he dropp'd ; his horses rear'd
Backward upon him, rattling the empty car ;
Whose lord Polydamas perceived his plight
Soonest, and hasting to the horses' heads
First to Astynous, Protiaon's son,
Gave them with frequent charge to hold them near 560
And watch them well ; the while himself return'd
To mingle with the foremost van again.

Meantime at brass-helm'd Hector Teucer drew
A second shaft ; and, had he struck his aim
And slain him in his glory there in arms,
The battle 'mid the ships had quite been stay'd ;
But Zeus, preserving Hector all that day,
With watchful eye perceived it, nor vouchsafed
To Telamonian Teucer such renown,
But, as he drew against the other, brake 570
The well-twined string upon the flawless bow,

So that the brass-barb'd arrow slanting wide
Wander'd, and from his hand the weapon dropp'd.
He shudder'd, and address'd his brother thus :

“ Ah, brother ! Ever in this war our hopes
Are shorn of their fulfilment by some God,
Who now hath dash'd from out my hand this bow,
Snapping the string which early this same morn
I bound thereto well-twined, that all day long
It might endure the spring of arrows forth.” 580

To whom the giant Son of Telamon :
“ Leave therefore, friend, those arrows and thy bow
Where they have fallen together, so to lie,
Since of his spleen against the Danaan host
Some God hath thus confounded them ; and haste
To get a javelin to thy hand, and shield
About thy shoulder ; and return so arm'd
Thyself, and with thee rouse the host beside.
If they must conquer, leave them not the ships
Without a struggle ; battle till we die !” 590

He spoke ; and Teucer laid the bow aside
Within the neighbouring tent, and round him braced
A four-hide shield, and set a well-wrought helm,
Horseplumed (and dread the nodding of that plume),
Above his stately head, and also took
A brass-tipp'd spear ; and so returning moved,
And hasted once again to Ajax' side.

Hector saw Teucer's arrows thus made nought,

And loud to Troy and Lycia raised his voice :

“Trojans, and Lycians, and Dardans, staunch in arms !

Be men, O friends, and of your olden might, 601

As through these hollow galleys now we range,

Be mindful still ; for with mine eyes I saw,

This moment past, the arrows of their chief

Made nought by Zeus. Full easy to discern,

Marvellous in operation amongst men,

The arm of Zeus ; both whereunto he grants

The greater glory ; and where he maketh low,

Withholding succour ; even as now he makes

The might of Argos low, but aideth us. 610

Close your ranks therefore ; flinch not in the fight

Amongst these galleys. And, if any fall

By sword or javelin, to his hour of death

Brought in this battle, let him die content :

So standing for his country's sake to die,

Is no unworthy thing ; and he shall leave

His wife and children safe thereby, and home

And land unminish'd ; when Achaia's sons

Sail to their own dear country driven at last.”

He spoke, and quicken'd every hand and heart ; 620

Whilst Ajax adverse on his comrades call'd :

“Hold, men of Argos, hold to honour fast !

’Tis death, if they remain amongst the fleet,

And safety, if ye but repel the ill.

Expect ye, when ye once have lost the ships,

To walk the roaring waters dry-foot home ?

Or are ye deaf to bright-helm'd Hector's shouts,
Threatening to burn the galleys, and with cheers
Kindling his host? His voice is loud enow :
To no sweet dance that summons; but to war. 630
Nor have we better counsel in our power,
Than, might and main, to meet him, front to front.
Better to perish once for all, or stake
Our lives upon one moment, than remain
Wasting in this long struggle still spun out,
And pent and straiten'd thus by feeblers men !"
He spoke, and quicken'd every hand and heart.

Anon by Hector Perimedes' Son
Schedius, the chieftain of the Phocians, fell ;
Whilst Ajax slew Antenor's son, renown'd 640
Laodamas, a leader in the van.
Polydamas slew Otus ; he the friend
Of Phyleus' Son, and in Cyllene born,
A leader of the brave Epeian tribes.
Meges beheld his comrade's fall, and sprang
Against the other ; yet Polydamas
Stooping escaped his javelin, and it err'd ;
Apollo brook'd not that Panthoüs' Son
Should fall by Meges ; but it pierced the breast
Of Cræsmus ; with a clash to earth he fell, 650
And Meges stripp'd the armour off his corse.

On whom, thus busied, Dolops leapt, the son

Of Lampus, and a youth well-skill'd in fence ;
(Lampus, begotten by Laomedon,
A prince amongst the people, and his son
Was Dolops, proved and practised in the war).
Approaching near, he drave his pointed spear
Right through the centre of Phylides' shield ;
Yet did the well-ribb'd corslet save his life ;—
The stout good corslet Phyleus brought of old 660
From Ephyre and the banks of Selle's stream,
The token which Euphetes, king of men,
Bestow'd on Phyleus as his guest to bear
In battle, and to guard him from his foes ;—
This now preserved the life of Phyleus' Son.
Then in his turn the spear of Meges struck
The cone above the other's brass-bound helm ;
And shore the crest and horse-hair plumes away ;
So that the fresh-dyed scarlet feathers fell
Together, and lay tarnish'd in the dust. 670
Yet Dolops dauntless still was fighting on
Nor had lost hope of victory, when, unseen,
In aid of Meges Menelaus came
Full-arm'd, and, passing by his flank, took stand
Behind, and struck him through the shoulder thence ;
So that the point sped quivering through the chest
Joyous and onward ; he on earth fell dead.
And on his corse the two victorious rush'd
Together, to despoil it of its arms.

Hector beheld, and on his brethren call'd, 680
Loudly on all, but Hicetaon's son,
The mighty Melanippus, most he chode ;
(Him who had whilome in Percote grazed
Free of all peril his slow-pacèd herds ;
But, when the Danaan galleys came, return'd
To Ilion, and in Troy conspicuous shone,
Dwelling in Priam's house, and by the king
Like his own children honour'd)—by his side
Stood Hector, and rebuked him thus, and spake :

“ Shall we, my comrade, so desert the dead ? 690
Is not the heart within thee shamed to see
Thy kinsman slain ? And seest thou not how thick
The foe flock round him, busy for his arms ?
On then with me ! Nor may this struggle end,
Ere either the Argives by our might have fallen,
Or they amid our slaughter take the towers
Of Ilion, from her summit headlong thrown.”

He spoke and led the way, and with him went
The godlike hero ; whilst on the other side
Huge Telamonian Ajax cheer'd his host : 700

“ Show mindful of your olden might, my friends ;
Think of your honour in this deadly strife ;
Who cling to honour fast, are mostly saved ;
Flight is but shame, nor strength is found therein.”

He spoke to men whose blood already ran
Hot to repel the Trojans. In their hearts
They cast about his word, and with a fence

Of brazen lances hedged the ships ; but Zeus
Still fired the Trojans on. Then Menelas,
Brave Atreus' son, address'd Antilochus : 710

“ Antilochus, of all Achaians here
Younger in years is none nor swifter of foot
Nor stronger of arm, than thou ; leap therefore forth,
If haply thou mayst strike some Trojan down !”

He spoke, and hasted back himself, but spurr'd
The other forward. From the van he sprang
Alone, and round him look'd, and poised his spear
Aiming ; the Trojans cower'd before his aim ;
Nor vain the javelin sped, but struck the chief,
Ev'n Melanippus, Hicetaon's son, 720

In his mid charge and full upon the chest.
He fell, and loudly round him clash'd his arms.
And Nestor's Son sprang tow'rd him, as a hound
Springs to a stricken fawn, whose limbs are loosed
Beneath her ; for a hunter's dart hath struck
And pierced her leaping from her grassy lair ;
So, Melanippus, sprang Antilochus
On thee, to strip the armour off thy limbs ;
Whom Hector saw, and hasted to repel ;
Nor then for all his ardour the other stood ; 730
But turn'd him, quailing, as a beast of prey,
After a mischief done amongst a herd—
The dog perchance, or herdsman, slain—retreats
Affrighted, ere a crowd can gather near ;
Ev'n so turn'd Nestor's Son, amid a shower

Of baleful darts, which Hector and all Troy
Pour'd with sky-piercing clamour on his back ;
Yet firm again he stood, and wheel'd him round
To face them, when within his comrades' ranks.

But now the Trojans pour'd upon the ships, 740
Furious as ravening lions, and brought thereby
The will of mighty Zeus to pass ; for Zeus
Breathed his high spirit on them, and charm'd away
All courage from the Argives, nor vouchsafed
Their wonted fame, but still exalted Troy ;
And still to Hector only gave renown,
Till wasting flames should fall upon the ships,
And Thetis gain her prayer against the Fates.
Expectant therefore till his eyes behold
The blaze of a burning ship, he sate serene, 750
But from that hour intending to roll back
The tide of battle, and to drive in rout
The Trojans, but exalt the Danaan name.
With this intent he breathed in Hector's breast
The spirit, erst flaming high, to higher flame ;
So that he seem'd as Ares, when he lifts
His furious spear in battle ; or as fire
Raging amongst the mountains, through the glades
Of a deep forest, and consuming all :
Foam was upon his lips ; two balls of fire 760
Under his cloudy eyebrows shone his eyes ;
And o'er his temples terribly as he moved

Uptowering through the battle rock'd his helm :
For Zeus was present to his aid from heaven,
Singling him only out of thousands there
For glory and for honour : yet his life
Was short pre-doom'd, and at that very hour
Pallas Athene swifter sped the day,
When by Achilles he must needs be slain.

But now he ranged victorious, and assay'd 770
If peradventure he might pierce their ranks,
Where thickest and their men best-dight he saw ;
Yet could not break them, howsoe'er he strove ;
For firm they held together, like some tower
Compact, or like a cliff, that rises sheer,
And huge, and neighbour to the hoary deep,
And bears the stress of whistling winds, and stems
The billows idly surging at its base ;
So stood unmoved the Danaans, unappall'd ;
Till he, his form one blaze of living fire, 780
Sprang to their midst, and on them fell, as falls
On some swift bark a billow, nursed and swoll'n
By tempest in the clouds ; and all the bark
Is lost in spray and vapour ; but the blast
Roars fiercely in the sail ; and all aboard
Feel their hearts sink within them for their fear,
So scarcely from the jaws of death they run :
E'en such the terror tore the Achaians' hearts ;
For he was as a lion, deadly bent

On oxen that by myriads graze the herb 790
Of a wide marsh ; whose herdsman knows not yet
The art to battle with a beast of prey
To save his herd ; but with the first or last
Still paces, whilst upon the midmost springs
The lion, and one devours, and all affrights :
So then by Hector and by Father Zeus
In more than mortal panic fled dismay'd
The Achaians all ; and one he slew, the son
Of Copreus, Periphetes, born and bred
In rich Mycenæ ; but his father erst 800
Carried the orders of Eurystheus' tasks
In message to the might of Hercules.
The good son of an evil father born
Was he, and in all manner of virtue shone,
Whether in battle, or for speed of foot,
Or for sage judgment, of his country's best :
Yet served to heighten now great Hector's fame ;
For as he turn'd, he stumbled in the rim
Of the long buckler sheltering head to foot,
And backward fell ; and loudly, as he fell, 810
The brazen morion round his temples rang :
And Hector heard, and running to his side
Took stand, and plunged his spear within his breast,
Slaying him in his comrades' sight ; nor they,
How grieved soever for his death, could aught
To save him, but by Hector stood appall'd.

And their own ships show'd now before their eyes ;
For, either side, the foremost on the beach
Encompass'd them, like horns ; whilst through the lane
The Trojans pour'd. And soon they drew them back
Farther, most sorely straiten'd, ev'n behind 821
The whole first line of galleys, to the tents ;
Yet rallied there embodied, nor dispersed
All broken through the camp ; for shame and fear
Still held them firm ; and each with ceaseless cheers
Call'd on his neighbours ; most, Gerene's Chief,
Nestor, the guardian of Achaia's host,
Besought them in their parents' names to stand :

“ Hold fast, my friends, for honour's sake hold fast.
Bethink ye of your name's repute elsewhere ; 830
But above all let every man remember
His own dear wife and children, land and home,
And his own parents (whether these be dead
Or living still)—yea, in their names I plead,
Whose voices far away ye cannot hear—
Stand bravely still, nor turn to craven flight.”

He spoke, and quicken'd every hand and heart.
Then from their eyes Athene moved the mist
Divinely spread, that light from either side
(Both from the fleet behind and war in front) 840
Broke on them, and they saw brave Hector clear,
And knew his comrades, both how many stood
Aloof behind, nor mingled with the fight,
And all who battled with him 'mid the ships.

But mighty-hearted Ajax brook'd no more
To stand where others half-retiring fought ;
But with huge strides along the galleys' decks
Advanced, and wielded in his hands a pole
Huge, heavy, two-and-twenty cubits length,
Spliced with brass clamps, and strong for naval war. 850
As when a master of the horseman's art,
From stud of many horses leashing four,
Speeds them across a plain beneath the walls
Of a great town along a crowded road ;
And many men and women wondering stare
Upon him, for with certain step he leaps
From this to that, and still his station shifts
Securely, nor beneath him checks their flight ;
So, with long strides, from deck to deck advanced
Ajax, and raised a voice that reach'd the sky, 860
Invoking with dread shouts the Danaans still
To save their tents and galleys. Nor adverse
Bode Hector then amongst his well-mail'd men ;
But as a tawny-feather'd eagle swoops
Straight down upon a flock of wingèd birds
Feeding beside a river—geese perchance,
Or cranes, or lithe-neck'd swans ; so Hector sprang
Direct upon a dark-prow'd ship ; whom Zeus,
Laying a mighty finger across his back,
Urged on, and with him kindled all his host. 870

Again amongst the ships the battle rose

Most hotly ; and so furiously they fought,
That thou hadst said that for the first time now
Fresh and unwearied in the war they met.
And in the struggle diverse were their thoughts ;
Scarce could the Achaians promise to their minds
Escape at all, but fear'd they needs must die ;
Whilst every Trojan's heart leap'd high with hope
To fire the ships and slaughter all their crews ;
Thus minded, face to face they battled still. 880

Erelong round that fair galley closed the fight,
Which brought Protesilaüs first to Troy,
But bare him never back to fatherland ;
Ev'n on the stern of that swift-voyaging bark
Hector laid hold, and round it 'twixt both hosts
All hand to hand the slaughterous struggle grew.
No more the armies stood apart, nor shot
Their shafts or javelins ; but, together mix'd,
One heart in every breast, they waged their war
With battle-axes keen, and mighty swords, 890
And maces, and spike-handled pointed spears.
And many a black-bound hilt and lovely blade
Dropp'd shiver'd off the shoulders of a foe,
Or from the hand that struck in splinters dash'd ;
And the earth ran with blood. Nor, when that stern
Was seized by Hector, would he loose his grasp,
But held the figure firm, and call'd on Troy :
“ Now bring ye fire, and let your shouts go up

Together ; Zeus bestows at last a day
That pays us all our pains—ev'n to destroy 900
These galleys ; which, though all devoid they came
Of Heaven's good-will, not less have wrought us hurt
Uncheck'd, because our elders in their fears
Would still detain me, when I would advance,
And with me held our host behind the walls.
But, though Zeus blinded so our sense awhile,
Now his own spirit impels and bids us on."

He spoke ; they sprang the fiercer on their foes.
Nor Ajax, sorely press'd, could longer stand,
But drew him back a little space, in fear 910
Of very death, down from the galley's deck
Descending to its waist, where lay the bench,
Seven feet in length, whereon the oarsmen sate ;
Thereon he stood, and o'er the bulwark lean'd,
Awaiting and repelling off the ship
With a long spear whoever durst advance
His gleaming torch towards it. And still his voice
Rose loud and dread, and on the Danaans call'd :

" Heroes, companions dear in Ares' field !
Be men, and mindful of your olden might. 920
Dream we a second army in our rear
Fresh to our rescue ? or a city strong
To save this ruin ? Nay, no fencèd town—
Whence, with a people brave to turn the day,
We yet might well repel them—now is near ;
But in our enemy's country, and far from home,

Troy in our front, the sea upon our backs,
We camp alone ; our only ray of hope
Is in the battle—in retreat is none !”

He spoke, and fiercely with his sharp-tipt lance 930
Pursued the every movement of the foe ;
So that whoever durst approach the ships
With fire obedient unto Hector's cry,
Ajax with that long spear awaiting pierced.
Twelve men before the ships he so struck down.

Iliad XVI

BUT all this while, though round that well-built ship
So raged the battle, yet Patroclus stood
Still by his lord Achilles in the tent,
In tears, like some black-bubbling fount, that drops
Its waters in dark vein adown a cliff ;
Whom seeing on divine Achilles fell
Pity, and wingèd words he thus began :
 “ Why dost thou weep ? Yea, like some little maid,
Patroclus, running by her mother’s side,
Who bids her mother lift her to her arms, 10
And, catching at her garment, checks her walk,
And wistful eyes her, weeping, and still weeps
Till lifted to her wish ; like such a girl,
Patroclus, sheddest thou these tender tears.
Hath aught of evil tidings reach’d thine ear
For mine own self or for the Myrmidons ?
Or aught from Phthia of an ill report
Known to thee only of Achaia’s host ?
For Æacus’ and Actor’s sons alike,
Menœtius, and King Peleus, both are said 20
To be still living, wealthy to their wont ;

Our fathers—were they dead, we well might weep.
Or griev'st thou for the Achaïans, that they fall—
Fall for their own transgression mid their ships?
Speak, that we both may know; nor hide thy thought."

Whom thou, Patroclus, groaning heavily,
Thus answeredst :

" Noblest of Achaia's sons,
Achilles, yet endure me, though I grieve
For the destruction that is on the host. 30
Smitten with spears or arrows, all, who late
Were bravest in the fight, lie cabin'd now ;
Tydeus' brave Son is by an arrow pierced,
And likewise through the hip Eurypilus ;
But spears have struck Odysseus, and the King :
To whom the leeches minister, and staunch
Their wounds ; but thou, Achilles, sitt'st unmoved.
Such wrath, as this thou nursest, ne'er be mine !
Mighty to only ruin ! What shall men
Reap of thee in the aftertime, if now 40
Thou shield not thine own people from this death ?
Oh hard of heart ! Nor Peleus thee begat,
Nor Thetis bare thee, but of rugged rock
Thou sprang'st, and of the barren ocean blue ;
So wild and all relentless this thy mood !
Yea, though some evil presage from the Gods,
Or message by thy mother borne from Zeus,
Hold thee from battle, yet send me, send forth
Me, and thy Myrmidonians with me led ;

So may some light upon the Danaans dawn. 50
And suffer that I clothe me in thine arms;
The Trojans shall behold in me awhile
Thine image, and affrighted hold them back,
And to the Danaans leave a breathing-space,
Short though it be, some respite from the war.
Fresh and unworn are we; but they are spent;
Our very battle-cry shall drive them back
Clear of our galleys to their city-walls."

He ended; ah unwise, who but besought
On his own head foul death and fate thereby! 60
Much moved, the fleetfoot hero thus return'd :

"What words are these, Patroclus, from thy lips?
Not for an evil presage from the Gods,
Nor message by my mother borne from Zeus—
But *this* the cause that stirs me to the quick,
That, who in rank alone excels at all,
Hath dared amerce his equal, and perforce
Seized his fair guerdon—*this* hath wrung my heart.
The maid, my prize selected by the host,
Meed of my valour, won by mine own spear, 70
Spoil of a fencèd city thrown by me,
Her, in despite of all I had endured,
Did Agamemnon of his sovereign state
Tear, as from some vile vagrant, from my hands.
Howbeit, the past be past; and sin it were
To nurse an endless anger. Yet my word
Stands, that I will not change, or e'er I hear

The cry of battle round my own fair ships :
But this may I vouchsafe them ; put my arms
About thy shoulders, and be leader thou 80
Of these my Myrmidonians forth to fight :
Since black indeed and threatening on the ships
The cloud advances ; and the Argives stand
Pent on a narrow strip, against the sea
Sore-straiten'd ; but the streets of Troy pour down
All flush'd with hope and fearless, who descry
The forehead of my helmet now no more
Gleaming against them ; oh, if Atreus' Son,
The King, but knew to bear him fair to me,
How quickly fleeing should they choke the streams 90
With corpses, who now battle round our camp !
For now no more to save this ruin serves
The javelin flaming in Tydides' hands ;
The accursèd voice from Agamemnon's lips
Is nowhere in mine ears ; but all about
The shouts of Hector shivering to the skies,
Who cheers to Troy, and they with answering cheer
Possess the plain victorious. Get thee forth,
Therefore, and save this ruin, and with might
Fall on them, lest they haply burn the barks, 100
And reave us of the dear return to home.
Yet hear and lay to heart my last behest ;
So only shalt thou gain my glory due
From all the host, and they the beauteous maid
Shall render back, and golden gifts withal.

Relieve them ; and thereafter straight return.
Though Zeus should put the victory in thy hands,
I pray thee, yet forbear, apart from me ;
Else shalt thou shame me more before the host.
And 'ware, lest whirl of onset and thy joy 110
Along the path of slaughter bear thee on
Foremost to Ilion ; surely shall some God
Descending there assail thee ; Troy is loved
Of many, and of arrowy Phœbus most.
Therefore I bid thee, at the first clear dawn
Of safety on the fleet, straight turn thee back
Uncaring of their battle o'er the plain :
Yea, by Apollo and our Father Zeus,
I would that not a man in either host
Escaped the death, and we alone, we two 120
Alone, might throw the towers of lofty Troy !"
So in the tent these two their converse held.

But Ajax, press'd by darts, could bide no more.
The will of Zeus and that renown'd host
Of Troy subdued his valour ; loud the clash
Of the bright morion smitten round his brows ;
And ceaseless still that smiting of the helm
And of the well-wrought vizor ; yea, albeit
The foe despite the pressure of their spears
'Vail'd not to shake his footing, yet his arm 130
With ever holding forth his glancing shield
'Gan weary ; painful pants possess'd his breath ;

Nor found he any space whereon to stand
And rest ; but ill came up fast shouldering ill.

Now ye, whose homes are on the Olympian steep,
Come ye, O Muses, to my prayer, and sing
How first the fire then fell upon the fleet !

Hector, to Ajax taking closer stand,
Struck full with falchion huge the ashen spear
Under the splice whereby the point was held 140
And shore it sheer in twain : in Ajax' hand
The headless shaft went idly whirl'd aloft,
But far the point flew clanging to the earth.
Then Ajax in his blameless soul confess'd
With shuddering awe the hand of Gods against him ;
How He who wields the thunder brake his plans
In sunder, and will'd triumph unto Troy ;
Therefore he drew him from the hail of darts.
Forthwith the Trojans hurl'd upon the bark
Fire, and the flames straight ran adown the hulk 150
In quenchless blaze, and wrapp'd it to the stern.
Achilles saw, and smote his thighs, and cried :
" Up, thou beloved of Zeus, Patroclus, forth !
I see the flames now shooting from the ships,
And dread lest they destroy them, and return
Be thus forbid for ever. Therefore, haste
To arm thee, whilst I rouse my men to war."
He spoke ; the other straight 'gan gird his form

In dazzling brass ; and first about his knees
Placed shining greaves with silver anclets clasp'd ; 160
And next about his chest the corslet bound,
The enamell'd starlike corslet of his lord ;
By baldric o'er his shoulders then he slung
The silver-hilted sword of sharpest steel ;
And on a stately head he donn'd the helm
Horse-plumed (and dread the nodding of that plume),
And grasp'd two javelins, one in either hand.
Only the spear he took not, the great spear,
Beamy and huge, of Peleus' blameless Son ;
That spear no second of Achaia's host 170
Might wield, but great Achilles knew alone ;
An ash it was, which Cheiron brought, a gift
To his dear sire from Pelion's peak, and wrought
To be a death to heroes. Then he bade
Automedon to quickly yoke the steeds ;
Automedon, the chief he honour'd most
After Achilles his unconquer'd lord,
The trustiest to his call in battle's need ;
And to his hest Automedon soon brought
Xanthus and Balios to the splendid yoke ; 180
Xanthus and Balios, footed like the winds,
Offspring of Zephyr from the Harpy born
Podargè, where she grazed on Ocean's shore.
And in the glossy traces by their side
He bound a third, the perfect Pedasus,
The steed Achilles took, what time he storm'd

The city of the King Eëtion,
Mortal, yet of immortals worthy mate.

Meantime Achilles bade throughout the camp
The Myrmidons array them in their arms; 190
Upspringing to his call they donn'd their mail.
Like bloody wolves, of ravening might immense,
Fresh from the correi of an antler'd stag
Trooping across a moor with red-smear'd jaws
To some black fountain, there with long, lank tongues
To lap the brimming waters; from their throats
The blood falls clotted, and their full-fed flanks
Heave, and within them still the spirit burns;
Ev'n such the chieftains of the Myrmidons
Around the comrade of Æacides 200
Sped to and fro; whilst in their midst tower'd high
Achilles, quickening steed and man to war.

Fifty in number were the swift black barks
That Zeus-beloved Achilles led to Troy;
In each upon its benches fifty men
Sate his battalion; chieftains five he chose
To give them trusty signal; but himself
Of his surpassing might was lord of all.
Menesthius of the glancing corslet, son
Of the great River Spercheius, led one band; 210
Menesthius, whom fair Polydora bare
Daughter of Peleus to the River-God,

What time she lay though mortal by the side
Of an Immortal ; but the common voice
Gave him to Borus Periereus' son,
Who wedded her with priceless gifts espoused.

The second was of brave Eudorus led
Son of a maid reputed virgin erst
Daughter of Phylas, loveliest of the quire,
Fair Polymela ; her amongst the maids 220
Singing and dancing in the virgin choir
Of Artemis the huntress golden-bow'd,
Immortal Argeiphontes saw and loved ;
And straightway from his Acacensian grove
The God into the upper chamber went
And lay with her by stealth ; where she conceived
This noble son Eudorus, fleet of limb,
Nor less a warrior brave. In after-days,
When She, who ministereth to pangs of birth,
Had brought him forth into the light of day, 230
The might of Actor's son, Echeclus, gain'd
His mother, with a countless dower espoused.
But *him* the agèd Phylas cherished close
As his own child, and nurtured with all love.

The third Pisander son of Maimalus
Commanded, of the Myrmidonian tribe
Best spearman, save Achilles' nearest friend.

The fourth the agèd Phœnix ; and the fifth
Alcimedon, Laercès' blameless son.

But, when they all were marshall'd with their chiefs, 240
Each band in order due, Achilles thus
Address'd his admonition strong, and spake :

“ Forget not now the threatenings that ye cast
'Gainst Troy, what time ye bode aboard your barks,
Whilst yet my wrath endured, and every tongue
Amongst you cast it in my teeth, and cried :
' Truly his mother's milk was very gall
' To nurture this hard heart in Peleus' Son ;
' Ruthless, to hold us fretting on our ships !
' 'Twere liever to sail bootless back to home, 250
' If wrath hath thus choked up thy better sense.'

Thus oft ye gathering murmur'd at your lord ;
And now the time has come ; behold the path
To that great strife, which was your longing erst ;
Forth, ye brave-hearted, forth to fight with Troy !”

He spoke, and quicken'd every hand and heart.
And to their leader's voice in closer wedge
His legions drew together ; as a wall
To some high palace built of stones compact,
Stands rear'd by man to screen him from the storm ; 260
So close, and side by side, and targe to targe,
Helmet to helmet, man to man, they press'd,
The nodding plumes upon the neighbour crests
Mix'd meeting ; but before the phalanx-front

Two heroes, ardent both alike to show
The vanmost of the van, begirt their arms,
Patroclus and Automedon. Meantime
Achilles moved within his tent, and raised
The lid from off a deep enchasèd chest,
Which Thetis silverfooted Nymph divine 270
Had stored with tunics to the brim, and cloaks
To fend away the winds, and woollen rugs,
And for the voyage stow'd aboard his bark.
Therein lay goblet beautifully wrought,
Wherefrom nor other man was wont to drink
The glowing wine, nor he to other God
To pour libation, save to Father Zeus.
This took he from the chest, and fumèd first
With incense, then with water's limpid streams
Rinsed it, and cleansed his hands of taint, and drew 280
The glowing wine; so, standing in the mid
Enclosure, lifting up his eyes to heaven,
He pour'd it, praying; nor escaped the prayer
His ears, to whom the thunder is delight:
"O Thou, who dwell'st remote, O Zeus supreme,
The Lord of all Pelasgos, and enthroned
On froze Dodona's snows; and round thy throne
Circle the Sellian seers, for thee devote
To feet unwashen, and to bed on earth;
As thou erewhile didst hearken to my prayer, 290
And honouredst me, and smotest Achaia low,
So now once more fulfil me my desire!

Myself must needs remain amongst the ships :
But forth I send my dearest with my host
The Myrmidons to battle : oh, vouchsafe
Thy glory to companion him, great Zeus ;
Strengthen the heart within him ; that perchance
Hector may know, if thus my friend avail
Alone, apart from me, to bear the fray,
What fury and invulnerable might 300
Will fire his arm, when I move forth to war.
And grant that, when he soon hath chased away
The tumult and the rout from off the fleet,
Unscathed may he return amongst these barks,
Safe with mine arms, and these my gallant men."

He ceased, whose prayer the Lord of counsel heard,
And half vouchsafed, and half withheld the boon ;
He granted to roll back the tide of war
From off the fleet, but safe return withheld.
But after such libation and such prayer 310
Achilles entering his tent replaced
The cup within the chest ; yet came again
And stood before the door ; for still he loved,
Albeit he went not forth, he loved to gaze
On that dread battle raging 'twixt the hosts.

Meantime his men were mail'd, and round his friend
Ranged, till the signal sounded to the charge.
Quick they swarm'd out, like wasps, that have their nest
Beside some public way, where children still

Torment, and ever of their baby sport 320
Bestir them on the path whereby they hive ;
Whose hiving is a common pest to men ;
For if perchance a passer-by that way
Perturb them unaware, with dauntless hearts
In one full swarm they battle for their brood ;
Not less the Myrmidonians knew their hearts
Beat strong within them, as they streaming came
With inextinguishable battle-cry ;
To whom Patroclus raised his voice, and spake :
 “ Myrmidons, ye the band of Peleus' Son ! 330
Now mind ye of what mettle ye are bred !
So shall his loyal comrades honour best
Our lord, the noblest man aboard the fleet :
So shall broadruling Agamemnon rue
The frenzy of the hour wherein he dealt
Dishonour on Achaia's noblest son.”

He spoke, and quicken'd every hand and heart.
And full they fell on Troy ; and loud the ships
About them echoed quivering with their shouts.
But when the foe beheld Menœtius' Son, 340
Him, and his comrade, glittering all in arms,
Their hearts were flutter'd, and their line 'gan quake,
With thought that Peleus' fleetfoot Son had thrown
Anger aside, and turn'd to Friendship's ways ;
And each 'gan cast behind him looks of dread
For place of refuge from the coming death.

Then first Patroclus aim'd his shining spear
Right where their throng was thickest, in their midst,
Hard by Protesilaus' galley's stern ;
And struck Pyræchmes leader of the band 350
Of plumed Pæonians from far Amydon,
Their city on broad Axius. Him hé struck
Through the right shoulder ; prone in dust he fell
Groaning his last ; round whom his comrades fled
Appall'd ; such terror had Patroclus wrought,
Slaying their leader and their best in war.
He drove them from the fleet, and quench'd the flames ;
The galley there remain'd still half-consumed ;
The while the Trojans with a panic-cry
Retired ; on whom the Danaans 'twixt the barks 360
Pour'd like a flood, and Tumult rose supreme.

As when from some great mountain's lofty head
The Wielder of the thunder moves a cloud,
Straight every promontory and peak and grove
Stands clear, whilst to their highest the heavens break up
Ev'n so, when now the Danaans had repell'd
The storm of fire from off their fleet, they gain'd
A momentary rest ; but respite long
Was not ; for not as yet in utter rout
Were turn'd the Trojans fleeing from the ships 370
Before Achaia's arms, but still in rank
Opposed they stood, retiring sorely press'd.

Soon was the battle scatter'd ; chief slew chief.
Mencæti'us' gallant Son pierced through the thigh
(Ev'n as he turn'd him round) Areilycus
With sharp spear-point, and drave the steel right through.
The bone was shatter'd, and to earth he dropt.

Renown'd Menelaus through the chest
Struck Thoas, where the buckler left it bare,
And loosed his limbs beneath him : and the Son 380
Of Phyleus bode the charge of Amphiclus,
And watch'd him and forestall'd him, smiting high,
Where is the thickest muscle in a man,
His hip ; around the point the tendons flew
Asunder ; and death's darkness veil'd his eyes.

And Nestor's sons—Antilochus first struck
Atymnius with sharp spear, and drave the point
Right through his flank, who fell before his feet.
Then Maris, wrathful for his brother's sake,
Sprang tow'rd Antilochus with ready spear, 390
And stood before the dead ; but, ere he struck,
Him noble Thrasymedes first forestall'd,
Nor miss'd, but through the shoulder sudden smote
The point shore off the muscles from the arm,
Stripping it naked to the very bone ;
Heavy he fell, and darkness veil'd his eyes.
Thus brethren two, by brethren two subdued,
Pass'd into Erebus, the followers famed

Of great Sarpedon, and the warrior-sons
Of Amisódarus—ev'n of him who rear'd 400
The monstrous, fell Chimæra, plague to man.

And Ajax, he of Oïleus, leapt forth,
On Cleobulus, where amid the throng
He stumbled ; and so took him, but forthwith
Destroy'd his might, plunging the hilted sword
Into his neck ; and all the sword reek'd hot
With blood ; whilst o'er the other's eyes came fast
The purple gloom of death and violent Fate.

And Peneleus and Lycon charging met ;
For each had miss'd the other with his spear ; 410
Both had but vainly aim'd, and, sword in hand,
Both rush'd together : Lycon smote the cone
On the plumed helm, but on the cone the brand
Split shiver'd to the hilt ; whilst Peneleus
Struck in the neck beneath the ear, and all
The blade pass'd through the throat ; skin only held
The head ; it hung ; the limbs beneath him gave.

And Acamas fell by Meriones,
Who with swift foot upon the chariot-step
Caught him now mounting, and drave hard the spear 420
Through the right shoulder ; from the chariot down
He fell ; and mist came shower'd across his eyes.

The ruthless spear of brave Idomeneus
Struck Erymas in the mouth ; the steely point
Under the brain went onward ; white the bones
Scatter'd, and all the teeth came shatter'd forth ;
His eyeballs fill'd with blood ; for breath he gasp'd
Through nostrils and through lips distended wide ;
And black the cloud of death enwrapt him round.

Thus slew these Danaan chieftains each his man. 430

Like wolves, that roam injurious, and assail
A flock of sheep, seizing the lambs and kids
Astray amongst the mountains by the fault
Of an ill shepherd ; these the wolves espy
And rend them in a feeble panic driven ;
So fell the Danaans on the troops of Troy,
Who clean forgot their olden spirit and strength,
Turning them only to tumultuous flight.

But Telamonian Ajax only sought
To smite brass-helmèd Hector ; yet, expert 440
In fence, and shielding close his shoulders broad
With bull-hide buckler, Hector shunn'd unscathed
The hissing arrow and the crashing spear ;
Who knew full well the victory all inclined
Against him ; nathless, in his fate's despite,
Stood firm, and fain would save his brethren dear.

Gloomy as off Olympus rolls a cloud,
Drawn from the firmament, across broad heaven,
When Zeus hath breathed a tempest to its height ;
So came they in dark tumult off the fleet ; 450
Nor now repass'd the trench in fair array ;
Hector alone his steeds bare swift across ;
Yet left he all his host about the brink
Reluctant ; for the trench there stay'd their flight :
And in the trench full many a chariot-horse
Snapt short the pole, and left the shatter'd car :
The while Patroclus cheering press'd amain
On Troy designing ruin : they with shriek
And panic choked to right and left all paths
Dissever'd ; overhead the dust-storm swept 460
Cloudlike beneath the clouds ; and every steed
Strain'd his full stretch, careering from the camp.
But *he* with shout there held his way, where'er
He saw their rout most stricken ; and their chiefs
Under his chariot-wheels roll'd headlong fell,
And cars like cymbals rang beneath him strewn.
The swift immortal barbs, the glorious gift
Of Gods to Peleus, leaping clear'd the trench
And yearning forward flew ; and loud his heart
Cried against Hector, and to smite him down 470
He long'd, but him his steeds bare fast away.

As with the weight of waters groans the earth
Under a storm in autumn, when Zeus pours

His floods most fiercely, and is wroth with men
Who deal unrighteous judgments, and perforce
Chase Justice from her seat, nor give regard
Unto the voice and warnings of high heaven ;
Therefore their waxing rivers break their bounds ;
And every pelting stream upon the hills
Tears like a torrent, plunging to the sea 480
In thunder, and the works of men are marr'd ;
So, with like thunder, fled the steeds of Troy.

Anon Patroclus turn'd their foremost rank,
And backward to the fleet compell'd them loth
Nor suffer'd to the town escape, but 'twixt
The ships and river and the lofty wall
Slew them with ceaseless onset to and fro
Avenging many. Pronous through the chest
(There where the buckler left it bare) he struck
First with bright spear, and 'neath him loosed the limbs ;
Who fell crashing to earth. Then Enop's son, 491
Thestor, where in the polish'd car he sate
Close-huddled (for with stricken sense he crouch'd
And from his hands the reins had slidden), him
Patroclus standing near with spear-point pierced
Through the right jaw, and drave it through his teeth ;
Then by the point over the chariot's rim
Drew him yet pendent ; as a man, who sits,
Fishing upon a piece of jutting rock,
Draws home by line and glistening hook a fish ; 500

Thus drew he forth Thestor with gaping jaws
From out the chariot by his shining spear,
And thrust him faceward down, and, as he fell,
The life departed. Next upon the head
He struck Erylaus charging ; and the skull
Was cleft within the helm ; headlong to earth
He dropt, and o'er him came the Spoiler Death.
Then Ipheus, Erymas, and Echius,
Epaltes, Pyris, and Amphoterus,
Tlepolemus, Damastor's son, the son 510
Of Argeus, and Evippus—one by one
Slaughtered, he levell'd to the fruitful earth.

But when Sarpedon saw the long-robed bands
Of Lycians thus beneath his arm subdued,
Rebuking on his godlike men he cried :
“ Shame on you, Lycians, shame ! Whence flee ye thus ?
Stand fast ; be brave ; myself will meet this man,
And see who so surpasseth of his might.
Heavy the trouble he hath brought to Troy,
Many and brave the heroes he hath slain.” 520

He spoke, and sprang in armour to the earth ;
Likewise the other, when he saw, sprang down ;
And as on rock farseen two vultures rush,
Hook-beak'd, crook-claw'd, with clanging cry to fight,
Thus these with battle-cry together ran.

Whom Zeus beholding pitied ; and he turn'd

To Herè, his own sister and his wife :

“ Unhappy that I am ! Whom Fate now bids
See mine own son, Sarpedon, of mankind
Dearest to me, beneath Patroclus fall. 530
My heart is sunder'd in me, and my mind
Ponders, whether to pluck him, ere he fall,
Far from the baleful battle, and secure
Repose him in rich Lycia—or perforce
Suffer his death before Patroclus' spear.”

And royal broadbrow'd Herè made reply :
“ Most dread our Father ! Fall from thee these words ?
Wouldst thou release a mortal from his doom
Long-since predestined ? Yea, if such thy will ;
But be assured, no God will praise the deed. 540
And ponder in thy heart this thing beside ;
If thou send thy Sarpedon rescued home,
Will not some other God have like desire
Thereafter from the strife to rescue home
His son ? For many are the sons of Gods
In war round Priam's palaces array'd ;
And so wouldst thou bestir a burning hate.
But, if he be indeed so dear, and thus
Thy heart lamenteth o'er him, though perforce
Before Patroclus thou endure his fall, 550
Yet, when the breath of life hath fled, send forth
Death and sweet Sleep to bear him far away
Ev'n to broad Lycia and his own domain ;
That there his brethren and his kith and kin

May honour him by burial and a tomb
And cairn ; and this is what the dead desire."

To whom the Father yielded, yet shed down
Thick drops of blood, like dew, upon the earth,
For honour of his child, in Troy's rich fields
Destined to early death and far from home. 560

And each had near'd the other on the field,
When first Patroclus hurl'd his spear, but err'd,
Striking famed Thrasymelus through the flank,
Loosening the limbs beneath him.—Also threw
Sarpedon erring from his aim, yet struck
Through the right shoulder Pegasus, the horse ;
Who falling, gasping out his life, neigh'd shrill,
Snorting in dust, and fast the spirit fled.
Whereat the pair in yoke asunder sprang ;
The yoke above them creak'd ; the reins were all 570
Confounded ; for their fellow lay in dust.

Thereto Automedon was then the stay ;
Snatching the whetted falchion from his hip
He leap'd, and cut away (nor cut for nought)
The traces of the third ; and straight the pair
Were righted, and once more betwixt the reins
Together in the baleful battle coursed.
Again Sarpedon hurl'd his shining spear,
Erring, for by Patroclus pass'd the point
O'er the left shoulder harmless ; then in turn 580
High rose Patroclus with impending lance,

Nor vain the shaft escaped his hand, but struck
There where the ribs enclose the embedded heart.
He fell, as falls a poplar or tall pine
Hewn on the mountains by a sharp-edged axe,
Thereafter to be framed some vessel's plank ;
So he, before his steeds and chariot prone,
Gnashing his teeth, in dust and blood lay soil'd.
Or as a lion 'lighting on a herd
Kills 'mongst the slow-paced kine a tawny bull, 590
High-mettled ; and he lies beneath his claws
Groaning his last ; thus 'neath Patroclus lay
Lycia's brave prince, indignant of his death,
And thus by name on Glaucus cried, and said :
 "Glaucus, I die ; and more than ev'n thy wont
Must thou be strong in arms and valiant now ;
And if indeed thou hast a brave man's heart
Give thy whole longing now to evil fight.
And first explore all sides throughout the lines
And gather Lycia's leaders, and inspire 600
To save Sarpedon's body ; then thyself
Come also, and do battle for my sake.
For most of all to thee shall I become
A byword everlasting and reproach,
If ye should lose my body, and if the foe
Thus in their galleys' midst should strip me fall'n.
Therefore hold fast, and round me call the host."
 And as he spoke, the cloud of death o'ercame
His eyes and lips ; Patroclus, on his chest

Stamping his heel, pluck'd from the wound the spear ; 610
The blood up-spouting follow'd ; and he drew
Weapon and life together from the wound :
The while the Myrmidonians held from flight
The panting steeds of both their lords bereft.

But that his cry stung Glaucus to the quick ;
Whose heart was troubled that he could not aid ;
He clasp'd and closed his fingers o'er his arm,
For sharp the anguish of the wound, wherewith
Teucer had struck and stay'd him by his shaft
From evil to Achaia. Therefore, loud 620
He pray'd, and call'd upon the arrowy God :

“Hear me, O King Apollo ! Who perchance
Art now in wealthy Lycia far reposed,
Or nigh to Troy ; but, wheresoe'er thou art,
Wilt hear who in his sore distress thus calls
Upon thee—such distress hath fallen on me.
For this my wound is strong, and wrings my hand
With bitterest anguish ; nor thereon the blood
Can yet be staunch'd ; but heavy with it droops 630
The shoulder, failing to uphold my spear
Firm, that I may go forth against the foe.
And, lo, our bravest fall'n, the son of Zeus,
Sarpedon ; nor hath Zeus saved his own son !
But hear, O King, and heal me this cruel wound,
And lull the smart to sleep, and grant me strength
Now to uprouse the Lycians with my cheer,

And then myself to fight to save his corse."

He ended, and Apollo heard his prayer,
And stay'd the pain, and from the baleful wound
Stanch'd the black blood, and breathed new strength
upon him. 640

And Glaucus felt rejoicing that the God
Had of his might straight hearken'd to his prayer;
And moving through the lines first roused the chiefs
Of Lycia, steadfast round their king to fight;
Thence strode toward the Trojans, where he saw
The brave Agenor, and Panthöus' son,
Polydamas, with noble Hector stand;
These he approach'd, and spake his wingèd words:
"Hector, unmindful thou hast grown of those,
Who far from their own homes and all they love 650
Here for thy sake and thy alliance fight
Ev'n to the death; yet thou carest not to aid!
Fall'n lies Sarpedon, Lycia's glorious king,
Her guardian by his judgments and his might;
Him hath Patroclus slain in iron war.
Stand therefore, friends, stand rallying to his side;
Brook not that Myrmidonian hands should wreak
By outrage on his body and his arms
Their vengeance for the many who have fallen
Here by our spears amongst their arrowy ships." 660
He spoke; and from the bottom of their hearts
Insufferable sorrow unsuppress'd

Seized on the Trojans ; for, albeit from far
He came, yet to their city he had been
A bulwark ; many were the men he led ;
Of whom he still was foremost, best in war.
So, charging on Achaia's host, they went ;
And Hector, kindled for Sarpedon's sake,
Their leader ; but the others roused no less
Stood to the signal of Menœtius' son 670
Patroclus ; who upon the Ajax-two
Themselves afire for war, call'd loud, and said :

“ Fight, Heroes, fight on now with all our hearts ;
Brave as ye ever were, or braver, show !
For, lo, the man who first avail'd to burst
Our bulwark, ev'n Sarpedon, lieth slain ;
And oh if, further, we might win his corse
And shame it, and achieve his glorious arms,
And haply of his men, who guarding stand
About him, slay some others with our spears !” 680
He spoke ; their blood ran ardent to the war.

Anon on either side the battle-line
Was strengthen'd, Troy and Lycia in array
Against the Achaians and the Myrmidons ;
Then o'er the fallen chief with terrible shout
And shock of arms together clash'd the hosts ;
The while Zeus drew a curtain dark and dread
Of night above their strife, that round his child
The toil of battle might be dark and dread.

First Troy repell'd Achaia's bright-eyed sons ; 690
For one amongst the Myrmidons not least,
Noble Epeigeus, brave Agacles' son,
Was stricken ; he of old had sovereign sway
In populous Budeon, but had fled,
By reason of a noble kinsman slain,
To Peleus and the silver-footed Nymph ;
Who hearken'd to his prayer, and sent him forth
To follow great Achilles in the war
To Troy and Ilion's horse-abounding plains.
Him as he laid his grasp upon the corse 700
Bright Hector struck with stone upon the head,
And crush'd the skull within the heavy helm ;
Headlong above the body prone he fell,
And o'er him clouding came the Spoiler Death.
Whose fall Patroclus seeing chafed at heart ;
Sheer through the champions of the van he rush'd ;
As darts a hawk frightening a timorous flock
Of doves or starlings, so right through the ranks
Of Trojans and brave Lycians, dartedst thou,
Patroclus, wrathful for thy comrade's sake ; 710
And smiting Sthenelaus, the brave son
Of Ithemœnes, with a stone i' the neck,
Brakest through the tendons that upheld the head ;
Whereat great Hector and his van shrank back.
Far as long cast of javelin, when a man
Throws, straining all his strength, at game perchance,
Or war, where life may hang upon the cast ;

So far the Trojans fled, the Achaians gain'd.
But Lycia's chieftain Glaucus, rallying soon,
Slew Bathycles, the gallant son beloved 720
Of Chalcon, who in Hellas dwelt, renown'd
For substance rich amongst the Myrmidons :
Him with sharp spear pierced Glaucus thro' the chest,
Suddenly wheeling, when the other thought
Pursuing to o'ertake him ; and he fell
With crash of arms to earth. Thereat deep grief
Came on Achaia's sons, but much rejoiced
The Trojans, that so brave a man had fallen,
And rallying stood around his corse array'd.
Yet not were therefore mindless of their might 730
The Achaians, but their spirits bare them on.

And Merion slew a helmèd chief of Troy,
Laogonus, Onetor's gallant son,
Priest to Idæan Zeus, and like a God
Honour'd amongst the people ; him he struck
Under the ear and jaw ; fast fled away
The spirit from his limbs, and hideous night
Enwrapt him. Then against Meriones
Æneas sent a brazen lance, and thought
To hit him o'er the shelter of his shield ; 740
But he, forewatching, safe the javelin shunn'd
With incline forward ; far behind, the spear
Dash'd on the earthy floor, and all the staff
Quiver'd, and war's strong spirit spent its force ;

Thus vainly from Æneas' brawny hand
The spear flew, and vibrating sank in earth.
Whereat Æneas wrathful spake, and said :
 " Yet, hadst thou not been nimble in the dance,
My spear, Meriones, had quell'd thee quite ;
If only I had struck thee !"

750

And to him

Renown'd Meriones return'd reply :

 " Valiant thou art, Æneas ; yet 'twere task
Beyond thee clean, to quell the might of all,
Who come against thee ; thou thyself art man.
Verily, and if *my* spear struck thee full,
Maugre this high conceit, thou soon wouldst yield
Thy ghost to Hades and thy fame to me."

He spoke, by brave Patroclus thus rebuked :

 " Art thou thus prating here, Meriones,
Belying thy true valour? Howsoe'er
Thou threatenest, threatening words repel them not ;
Earth must first hold their champions in their graves.
In council is the end by busy tongues ;
In battle by the might of strong right arms ;
Not this the hour of speeches, but of deeds."

760

He spoke, and led the way, and with him went
His godlike comrade : as in mountain-glens
Riseth the din of axes on the oaks,
And far the hearing of the sound is borne ;
Thus rose from the broad earth the din of arms,
Of brazen corslet, leathern helm, and hide

770

Of buckler, smit by lances and by swords.
Erelong his closest comrade had not known
Sarpedon, for with darts and dust and blood
From sole to crown he was enveloped quite :
And thick the throng around his corse : as flies
Buzz swarming through a cow-house 'mongst the pails
In spring-time, when the milk brims full each bowl ;
Thus swarm'd they round the body. Nor Zeus had ta'en
From off that baleful strife his shining eyes, 781
But ever gazed and ponder'd in his heart,
Doubting the manner of Patroclus' death,
Whether bright Hector in that deadly stoure
Forthwith above godlike Sarpedon's corse
Should slay him and despoil his glittering arms,
Or whether, ere he fall, on yet more men
He hurry steep destruction. Such debate
He held within him, yet preferr'd at last
To suffer the great friend of Peleus' Son 790
Still to repel the Trojans and their chief,
And take the lives of many. Therefore, first
In Hector He awoke a spirit of fear ;
Who mounting to his chariot turn'd to flee,
And call'd the selfsame way to all his host,
Knowing the sacred scales of Zeus inclined.
Nor ev'n the valiant Lycians then stood firm,
But panic-stricken fled, who saw their king
Struck through the heart, amongst a heap of dead ;
For many had fallen about him ; where he lay 800

Zeus had to the utmost strain'd the cord of war.

So, from the shoulders of Sarpedon stripp'd,
The brazen glittering mail Menœtius' Son
Gave to the hollow galleys to be borne ;
Whilst thus the Ruler of the Clouds in heaven :
 " Phœbus, my son, now haste thee forth, and cleanse
The clouding blood from off Sarpedon's wounds ;
Bear him apart, and bathe him in the stream ;
And with ambrosia lave his limbs, and throw
Immortal raiment round him ; then bequeath 810
The burthen to the wingèd messengers
Death and sweet Sleep, twin-brethren, to be borne
To wealthy Lycia and his own domain ;
That there his brethren and his kith and kin
May honour him by burial and a tomb
And cairn ; and this is what the dead desire."

Nor Phœbus disobey'd his father's word.
Down to the battle-field from Ida's peaks
He flew, and lightly from the storm of darts
Lifted divine Sarpedon, and aloof 820
Bare him, and cleansed him in the river's stream,
And with ambrosia laved his limbs, and threw
Immortal raiment round him ; then bequeath'd
The burthen to the wingèd messengers,
Death and sweet Sleep, twin-brethren ; fast they flew,
And far in wealthy Lycia laid him down.

Meantime Patroclus press'd in hard pursuit
His chariot and Automedon on Troy ;
Fool, fool ! And to his own destruction blind !
Who, had he kept the word of Peleus' Son, 830
Had 'scaped the coming fates of death and night.
But, as it ever shall be, so that day
The will of Zeus surpass'd the will of man ;
Zeus, who oft frights the bravest, from his hand
Taking away the victory with all ease,
And oft again enkindling to the war ;
As now he kindled high Patroclus' heart.
Who first, Patroclus, say, who last, by thee
Fell, when the Gods thus beck'd thee on to death ?
Adrastus first, and brave Autonoüs, 840
Epistor, Melanippus, Echeclus,
And Meges' son, Perimnus ; yet anon,
Pylartes, Melius, and Helasus :
All these he slew ; and, save to turn to flight,
What other thought within the remnant bode ?
Yea, the high gates of Troy had yielded then
Before Achaia, by Patroclus storm'd
(So hotly in their front his spear was plied),
Had not divine Apollo ta'en his stand
Upon the steadfast towers, designing death 850
To him, but aid to Troy. Thrice to the foot
Of their high city-wall Patroclus came,
And thrice Apollo press'd a heavenly hand
Against his shining shield, and dash'd him back ;

But when the fourth time, more than man, he came,
Apollo lifted thus his warning voice ;

“ Back, back, Patroclus ! Son of Zeus, forbear ;
Not to thy spear is given to take proud Troy ;
Nay, nor (though he be mightier far) thy lord's.”

He spoke, and back Patroclus drew some space, 860
Shunning the wrath of Him who smites from far.

Hector the while had rein'd his hoovèd steeds
Under the Scæan gates, and ponder'd there
Whether again to urge them through the rout,
Or bid the host retire within the walls.

By whom, thus doubting, Phœbus took his stand
In likeness of a strong man in his prime,
Asius, brave Hector's uncle, brother-born
To Hecuba, and Dymas was their sire ;
But Asius dwelt in Phrygia, on the banks 870
Of Sangarus ; and in his image now
Appear'd divine Apollo, speaking thus :

“ Why, Hector, from the battle rests thine arm ?
It ill befits thee. Would to heaven I were
As much thy stronger, as I am thy less ;
Then haply this thy stay were to thy hurt !
But rouse thee, and against Patroclus guide
These strong-shod steeds ; and peradventure thou
Shalt slay him, if Apollo grant thee fame.”

He spoke, and through the battle pass'd away. 880

Then Hector to Cebriones gave word
To thong the horses forward, whilst the God,
Moving amongst the mellay, wrought dismay,
Confusion to Achaia, but to Troy
And Hector gave companionship of fame.
All others Hector pass'd nor cared to assail,
But only on Patroclus urged his steeds ;
Which seeing leap'd the other to the earth,
With left hand grasping spear, but in the right
He held a white jagg'd stone, within the palm 890
Firmly enclasp'd, and heaving hurl'd it forth,
Nor err'd far from his aim, nor sped the stone
Vainly, but struck the farfamed charioteer
King Priam's bastard son Cebriones,
Who held great Hector's reins, betwixt the brows.
The brows were crush'd together, nor the bone
Held, but the eyeballs dropp'd before his feet
To earth ; and like a diver down he fell
From his seat prone, and the breath left the corse ;
Whereat in wanton mood Patroclus mock'd : 900
 " Truly a nimble man ! How well he dives !
So he were only on the pearly seas,
Plunging for oysters, large would be the haul,
Albeit the waves were rough, when he leap'd forth :
So perfect this nice dive from car to earth,
Such diving needs must be a trade in Troy !"
He spoke, and toward the fallen hero sprang,
In wrath most like some lion, through the heart

Smitten whilst ravaging a fold, to whom
His own might is destruction ; thus sprang'st thou, 910
Patroclus, eager on Cebriones ;
But Hector likewise leap'd adverse to earth ;
And so above the body both incensed
Stood, as two lions 'midst a mountain's peaks
Battling above the carcase of a roe,
When both are hunger'd, mettled both alike ;
Not otherwise above Cebriones
Two equal lovers of the battle-cry,
Bright Hector here, and there Menœtius' Son,
Stood burning each to taste the other's blood. 920
Hector had seized the head, nor let it go ;
Patroclus gripp'd the foot ; and round the twain
Both hosts fast gathering closed in cloud of war.

As when the mighty winds of East and West
Conflicting meet within a mountain-glen,
To shake a forest to its inmost depths,
Beech-tree, and ash, and slender cornel-wood ;
The trees, with roar unutterable fill'd,
Dash their long-stretching branches, each on each,
And loud the crash of breaking boughs ; ev'n thus 930
Those hosts in ravage each on other leap'd,
Nor either knew a thought of deadly fear.
Many the spears around the corse infix'd,
The wingèd arrows leaping from the strings,
Many the huge stones on the shields repell'd

Of those who fought about him ; he the while
Lay all his giant length on earth outstretch'd,
Unconscious, clean forgetful of his art.

Ere yet the Sun had climb'd meridian height,
Darts flew and warriors fell on either side ; 940
But when He 'gan incline toward cattle-call,
Then, as in Fate's despite, the better show'd
The Achaians, and from out the storm of darts
Clear of the Trojans drew Cebriones,
And straight 'gan off his shoulders strip the arms.
But still Patroclus slaughtering rush'd on Troy :
Thrice with a dreadful shout he sprang, nor less
Than Ares seem'd, and thrice nine men he slew :
But, when the fourth time of his godlike might
He came—ah, then, Patroclus, then thine end 950
Appear'd ; for bright Apollo met thee then
In fatal fray ! Whom moving through the throng
Patroclus saw not ; since in cloud enwrapp'd
He came, and stood behind him, and with hand
Precipitate athwart his shoulders broad
Smote him ; and straight his dazèd eyes spun round,
Whilst off his head the God dash'd down the helm.
Roll'd then and rang beneath the chargers' feet
The vizor'd helm, and sank the plumes defiled
By dust and blood ; never till now that crest 960
Suffer'd such taint, nor could it suffer erst
Then when the head of more than mortal man

It guarded, and Achilles' beauteous brows ;
But now Zeus granted it to Hector spoil.
For death was on Patroclus : from his hands
The sharp huge shadowing spear in splinters fell ;
The buckler and the buckler's belt dropp'd down
And left his limbs unshelter'd ; and the mail
Round his broad breast was open'd by the God ;
His sense wax'd heavy, and his knees grew faint ; 970
He stood as one bewilder'd ; in whose rear
Euphorbus, the fair son of Panthous, came
(Euphorbus, of the Dardan youth unmatched
In chariot's guidance, and in sleight of spear
And speed of foot ; who, though so young and still
A tyro in the battle, yet had cast
Full twenty chiefs beneath him from their cars).
He first, Patroclus, drave his lance against thee ;
Yet slew thee not, but pluck'd the ashen shaft
Quick from thy back, and turn'd to flight, soon lost 980
Amongst the crowd ; all naked thou of arms,
Yet durst he not withstand thee ! So subdued
By stroke of an Immortal and that spear,
Patroclus 'gan within his own array
Retire, and fled from Fate ; whom half-withdrawn
Hector beheld and in such wounded plight,
And, through the files advancing, pierced his side
Nigh the fifth rib, and drave the point right through.
Loud clash'd his armour on him, as he fell,
And, falling, anguish'd all Achaia's host. 990

As when a lion on a wild tusk'd boar
Presses in battle joyous ; for the two
O'er a scant pool on some dry moor have met,
And both athirst, and mettled both alike ;
Panting and spent, the boar lies vanquish'd soon :
So Priameian Hector, spear in hand,
Approaching, robb'd Menœtius' Son of life,
Slaying him, who had there his thousands slain ;
And o'er him vaunting spake these wingèd words :

“ To thine own heart, Patroclus, thou hadst said 1000
How thou wouldst make my city desolate,
And bear the women of Troy across the seas
To a dark life of slavery in your homes :
Fond ! For before them bounded to the fray
The steeds of Hector ; and myself excel
All warriors, warring for their sake, and keep
Such day of doom afar ; but thou becom'st
The food of vultures ! Oh most hapless ! Lo
The glory of Achilles, and thy gain !
Who sent thee forth, but wiser stay'd himself 1010
Secure, and peradventure charged thee thus :

‘ Go thou, the mightiest of my men, and see
‘ That thou return not hither ere thou boast
‘ The corslet cleft in blood about the breast
‘ Of baleful Hector ’—these perchance his words,
And thus he then beguiled thy foolish soul.”

To whom with failing breath Patroclus said ;
“ Yea, Hector ; loud of ample cause thy vaunt,

On whom Apollo and almighty Zeus
This victory have bestow'd ; with ease as Gods 1020
They slay me, and themselves laid bare my breast.
Had twenty men like thee set all upon me,
So twenty should have perish'd by my spear.
But Fate, fell Fate hath slain me ; and of Gods
Apollo, and of men Euphorbus, struck ;
Thine but the third part in my death. Yet hear
These my last words, and lay them to thy heart :
Nor *thou* hast long to live ; but even now
I see Death stand—Death and a violent Fate
Beside thee ; and the son of Æacus, 1030
The blameless chief Achilles, strikes thee down !”

And as he spoke, Death wrapp'd him round ; and forth,
Forth from his limbs the spirit fled away,
Mourning the bloom and vigour that it left,
The beauty of manhood, and its own sad fate ;
Yet Hector still address'd him where he lay :
“ Predoom'st thou me, Patroclus, to this death ?
Yet it may hap that Peleus' noble Son
Shall be the first to perish by my spear.”

He spoke, and stamp'd his heel upon the corse 1040
And pluck'd the brazen weapon from the wound,
And toss'd him off the point supine ; then sped
With the same spear to slay Automedon ;
But him, whom he would fain have smit, the steeds
Immortal, and the glorious gift of Gods
To Peleus, swiftly bare secure away.

Iliad ̃III

NOR by brave Menelaüs, Atreus' son,
Patroclus fell in battle there unmark'd ;
Straight through the foremost in his flashing arms
He push'd, and took his station o'er the dead.
As moves the mother round a new-dropp'd calf,
Her first-born, moaning, nor hath known till then
The pains of bearing ; so moved Menelas
Around the body of the slain, and held
His spear and full-orb'd buckler well in front,
Ready to slay whoever durst assail. 10

But Panthous' warlike Son had also seen,
And now approach'd, and to the other spake ;
"Chieftain Zeus-born, and leader of the host !
Withdraw thee, quit the body, and permit
To me the bloody trophy of those arms.
None of all Troy nor Troy's renown'd allies
Boasts to have struck Patroclus ere I struck ;
Suffer then that I take the fame I won,
Lest else thine own sweet life be likewise lost."
To whom the hero of the auburn hair : 20

“Hear'st thou, O Father Zeus, this youngling boast?
Yet is vain-glory a dishonouring thing.
Panther or lion, or the bristling boar
(Wild though he be, the fiercest of the field),
Shows weak beside the thoughts of Panthous' sons.
So Hyperenor boasted, so he dared
Defy me as the craven of the host,
And shamed me and withstood me, yet shall ne'er
Gladden his parents or his dear-loved wife
Returning, borne upon his feet alive, 30
But fell, nor knew how sweet the youth he lost.
And so shalt thou, and I will loose thy strength,
If thou still stand'st against me. Rather hear
My warning, and withdraw thee to thy men;
Stand not persistent, till the stroke hath fallen;
'Tis a fool's part, repentance all too late.”

He spoke, but turn'd him not, who answer'd thus :
“Yea, him my brother thou slewest, and for him
Thou now shalt give the ransom ; though thou boast
How thou hast widow'd in the still recess 40
Of her new bridal-chamber his dear wife,
And laid a hopeless sorrow on his sire ;
Yet of their mourning should I make an end,
If in his father's lap, and in the sight
Of the fair Phrontis, I could fling thy head.
The peril then no longer be untried ;
To battle—be the issue life or death !”
He spoke, and struck full on the orbèd shield,

Yet the spear pierced not through ; the point was bent
Backward within the hides. Then in his turn 50
Rose Menelaus with a shining lance,
And call'd in prayer on Father Zeus, and pierced
The other, as he drew him back, i' the throat,
Ev'n at the gullet's lowest ; onward then,
Following his spear, wellweening of his might,
The hero sprang, and drave the point right through
His enemy's slender neck ; who dropp'd on earth
Outstretch'd, and loud around him rang his arms.
Sank dragged then in blood his tresses, fair
As crown the heavenly Graces, and the locks 60
Braided in gold and silver, smirch'd and stain'd.
Like as an olive, in a lonely nook
Nursed by a husbandman, where waters run
Redundant, breaks luxuriant into bloom ;
All gales breathe fresh and rock it to and fro,
Till into flower it bursts and blossoms white ;
Black with a sudden storm a wind may come,
And lay it from its furrow torn on earth ;
So fell Euphorbus, Panthous' warlike son,
Slain by the spear of Menelaüs there, 70
Who straight 'gan strip the armour off the slain.

And as a lion, weening of his strength,
Comes from his cradle on the hills, and springs,
Seizing the fairest of a grazing herd ;
He cracks its neck in sunder, in firm fangs

Clenching it close, and rends the paunch, and laps
The blood and flowing offal ; though perchance
Stand hounds and herdsmen no wide space aloof,
Aloof they rest, nor nearer dare approach,
For pale the panic holds them ; so the hearts 80
Of none were bold to face that glorious chief :
Who had achieved that armour for his spoil,
Had not Apollo grudged it, and himself,
In guise of Mentès, chieftain of the tribe
Of the Ciconians, come to Hector's side,
And with a stern rebuke address'd him thus :

“Hector, whilst thou thus wanderest in pursuit
Of what may ne'er be won, the heavenly steeds
Of great Æacides (and hard were they
For mortal man to manage or to yoke, 90
Save one, of an immortal mother born,
Their lord Achilles), Atreus' Son meantime,
Brave Menelaus, round Patroclus' corse
Ranges victorious, and hath slain the youth
Euphorbus, and for ever stay'd his might.”
So spake the God, and through the moil pass'd on.

But heavy o'er the soul of Hector came
A cloud of sorrow ; round him through the rout
He look'd, and straightway saw the two—the one
Stripping the armour off, the other slain, 100
The life-blood streaming from the mouthèd wound.
Then thither through the foremost straight he went,

With shrilly shout, and dazzling in his mail,
Like to Hephæstus and his quenchless fires ;
But not unheard of Atreus' Son that cry,
And to his own brave heart, muchmoved, he said :

“ Unhappy that I am ! For if I quit
This splendid armour, and leave him, who fell
Battling for vengeance of my wrong with Troy,
Truly whoe'er behold me cry me shame ; 110
Yet, if I stand for honour's sake alone
'Gainst Hector and all Troy, myself, being one,
Will soon be compass'd by the numerous host
Whom Hector gathers hither :—Tush, my heart,
Why idly arguest thus ? For, whosoe'er
Knows Heav'n against him, yet still stands to face
Whom Heav'n doth honour, great will be his fall.
None therefore who behold may cry me shame ;
Yielding to Hector now, I yield to Heaven.
And, if elsewhere I could but catch the cry 120
Of valiant Ajax, we might both return
Together, and would then renew the fight,
Though against Heaven itself, until we bare
To Peleus' Son this body of his friend :
The choice is but of evils ; this the least.”

Whilst in his secret soul he ponder'd thus,
The ranks of Troy drew near, and Hector first.
Rearward he fell, yet on the corse behind
Cast many a look regretful ; as retreats
A full-maned lion from a fold, whom hounds 130

And herdsmen drive with spear and shout, that freeze
The valiant heart within him ; loth and slow
He draws him off the flock ; ev'n so withdrew
Back from Patroclus Atreus' hero Son ;
Yet, soon as he regain'd his own array,
Turn'd him all round, and look'd about, in quest
Of Ajax, the great son of Telamon :
And quick descried him, on the battle's left,
Kindling, bestirring to the war, his men,
On whom had Phœbus breathed a panic-fear. 140
Swift to his side he ran, and spake, and said :
 " Haste, Ajax, this way haste, and with me join
To save Patroclus' body—so at least
To bear it to his lord Achilles home,
Though stripp'd and soil'd ; for Hector hath the arms."
 He spoke ; his words moved Ajax to the heart,
And both together thrust them to the front.

 Hector had meantime stripp'd those famous arms,
And was now trailing off the corse, with thought
The head to sever from the shoulders sheer, 150
And fling the body to the dogs of Troy ;
When Ajax with his towerlike shield approach'd.
Then Hector shrank into the throng, and sprang
Into his car, yet gave the famous arms
To be convey'd to Ilion and display'd
In glory to his name ; whilst Ajax took
Stand unopposed, shielding Menœtius' Son.

Like as a lioness shows amongst her whelps,
Assail'd by village-hunters as she leads
Her litter through a forest ; wroth she stands, 160
Infuriate, and, with scowling brows drawn down,
Makes o'er her eyes a veil ; such Ajax show'd
Moving around Patroclus ; at whose side
Stood Menelaus also, Atreus' son,
Still sorrowing, and his sorrow waxed more.

But Lycia's chief, Glaucus, cast angry eye
On Hector, and address'd a stern rebuke :
" Hector, in form most glorious, in thy deeds
Found lacking ! False the fame that rings thee round,
Who art a craven mere ! But take thou thought 170
How thou with thine own folk and natives born
Henceforth mayst hold alone thy city safe :
For from this day of Lycia none shall move
To battle for this all ungrateful town ;
Small thanks we get, though endless war we wage.
What hope hath lesser man of help from thee,
Thou stony-hearted ! who couldst leave of late
The body of Sarpedon—there to lie,
Thy guest, thy friend, to Argos spoil and prey ?
Great gain he was to thee and all thy state, 180
From whom thou hast not cared to drive the dogs.
Wherefore, if any Lycian hears my voice,
I bid him home depart, and leave these men
To the dread ruin settling on their heads.

For if they felt a spark of that true fire
Which should enkindle men who meet a foe
In fiercest battle for their hearths and homes,
Soon in the walls of Ilion then were drawn
This body of Patroclus ; and were this
Safe to the palaces of Priam borne, 190
Could we but win this from the battle's midst,
Then would the Argives yield us back their spoil,
Sarpedon's arms, and *him* too we might bear
Within the walls of Ilion, ransom'd home :
Of such a man is he the dear-loved friend,
Who now hath fall'n, and his companions near—
Even of their greatest, Peleus' noble Son.
So might it be ; but thou hast not the heart
To meet brave Ajax, and hadst hardly seen
His visage in the battle, ere thou shrank'st 200
A craven, knowing him the better far."

To whom bright-helmèd Hector sternly thus :
"Glaucus, come these vain-glorious words from thee ?
Thee have I deem'd the wisest, most discreet,
Of all who 'habit Lycia's fruitful realm ;
But witless mak'st thou this reproach of flight
From battle with great Ajax. No base fear
Moves me of battle or the tramp of steeds ;
But ever Zeus' high will surpasseth mine ;
Zeus, who oft frights the bravest, from his arm 210
Taking away the victory with all ease,
And oft again enkindling to the war.

On, therefore, with me, friend ; fight by my side ;
And see and know if all this day I seem
The craven that thou nam'st me ; well I wot,
Some Danaans, in despite of all their strength,
My spear shall stay from this dead hero's corse !”

He spoke, and to the Trojans shouting turn'd :
“ Trojans and Lycians, Dardan men-at-arms !
Stand fast, O friends, and mindful of your might, 220
Whilst in the arms of Peleus' blameless Son
I clothe me, from Patroclus slain my spoil.”

The bright-helm'd hero spoke, and moved away
From out the slaughterous strife, and ran, and caught,
Pursuing with quick feet, the men still nigh,
Who bore that famous armour tow'rd the town.
And standing from the perilous fray aloof
He changed his harness ; that which late he wore
He gave to sacred Ilion to be borne
By hands of those same warlike sons of Troy ; 230
But donn'd the other, ev'n the immortal mail
Of Peleus' son, Achilles ; which the Gods
Bestow'd on Peleus ; Peleus in his age
On his dear son ; the father's arms the son
Might wear, but ne'er attain'd the father's age.

Then Zeus supreme amidst the clouds look'd down
From heaven, and saw him girding on the mail
Of his great foe Peleion, and for ruth
Bow'd down his head, and to his own heart spake :

“Death is not in thy thoughts, most wretched man, 240
Yet is it near thee : the immortal arms
Of that surpassing chieftain, at whose sight
All others tremble, thou art girding on ;
And thou hast slain Patroclus his dear friend,
And stripp’d the armour from his head and limbs,
Which it belongeth scarce to man to wear ;
Yet, forasmuch as fair Andromache
Shall ne’er receive or see that glorious spoil,
Nor welcome thee her lord from battle home,
More glorious fame I will the while vouchsafe.” 250
Kroneion spake, and o’er his azure brows
Bow’d low his head ; whose Nod confirm’d the word.

The arms were apt to Hector ; in his heart
The spirit of Ares Enyalios came
Forceful, and fill’d his limbs with strength and life.
Through the renown’d allies he pass’d with shout,
Showing to all from out that armour’s blaze
Most like to Peleus’ noble-hearted Son.
One after one he stirr’d them with his voice,
Mesthles, Deisenor, and Thersilochus, 260
Asteropæus, and Hippothous,
Medon, and Glaucus, Ennomus the seer,
Chromius, and Phorcys ; these with kindling speech
He quicken’d, and address’d his wing’d words :
“ Hear me, my thousand neighbours and allies !
From your own States so many were not call’d

For quest or lack of numbers ; but because
With your whole hearts I deem'd ye would defend
Our wives and children from Achaia's sword.
For this I spend the substance of the folk 270
In gift and feast, to keep your valour high.
Cleave then to battle, be it life or death ;
The tryst of war hath ever either end.
Patroclus lieth slain ; and, whosoe'er
Wins but his body from their legions clear,
To whomso Ajax yields, to him I give
Half of the spoil ; myself, who slew him, keep
Half only ; as my honour, such be his."

He spoke ; they straightway with uplifted spears
Bore down upon the Danaans ; high their hopes 280
To drag the corse from Ajax spoil and prey :
Blind, blind ! whose deaths were many by his hand.
Yet thus to Atreus' gallant Son he spake ;
" Ah, brother ! Menelaüs Zeus-beloved !
Now must I quite despair return to home
Unto us two from out this perilous strait.
Great for Patroclus' body, lest it lie
Food to the vultures and the dogs of Troy,
My fear ; but greater yet for our own selves,
Thy life and mine, lest ev'n the worst befall. 290
For Hector in a cloud of war enwraps
All round us dark ; our deaths alone show clear.
Shout, therefore ; to our rescue call the chiefs."
Nor gallant Menelaüs disobey'd,

But raised his voice, and shouted through the host :

“ Friends, Chieftains, Captains of the Argive race !
Who oft have ate and drank in public state
At Agamemnon's and his brother's board,
Who each in his own nation is a King,
Whom name and fame attend by hest of Zeus : 300
Hard were it for me now to thrust my way
Right through this throng, and summon one by one ;
Like fire, the battle runs along the field.
But of your own wills to the rescue come :
Think of our shame—to leave Patroclus here,
Our fellow-chieftain, to be torn by dogs !”

He spoke ; the fleetfoot son of Oïleus
Ajax first heard, and speeding through the fray
First to the rescue came ; Idomeneus
Next, and the follower of Idomeneus 310
Meriones, to slaughterous Ares peer.
Nay, who may tell, though but in thought, the names
Who after these toward that rally press'd ?
Yet in pack'd order Troy still push'd her path
Onward, and helmèd Hector led the way.

As with loud roaring at a river's mouth
Huge billows roll against the swollen flood ;
Its coasts and brinks re-echo, for the sea
Is inward borne upon it ; such the sound
Wherewith the Trojans came. Yet steadfast stood, 320
With brass-bound bucklers serried to a hedge,

The Achaians, one in heart, around the corse.
Thick o'er their gleaming morions lay the mist
Shed by Kroneion ; who of old had borne
No hatred to Menœtius' Son in life,
And now begrudged his body to the dogs,
And fired his legions to repel their foe.

Yet first the Trojans gain'd a little space
And drove them in a panic from the corse ;
But, though on war intent, yet more intent 330
To win that prize, they seized it and withdrew,
Nor further sent their spears ; yet won it not,
For short th' Achaians' panic ; whom forthwith
Ajax avail'd to rally, Ajax, aye
For beauty, and for mighty feat of arms,
First of the Danaan tribes, save only one,
The blameless son of Peleus. He made way
Straight through the foremost, seeming in his might
As a wild boar, who, hunted o'er the hills,
Hath turn'd to bay, and scatter'd with all ease 340
The hunters through the forest and their hounds ;
So then the giant son of Telamon,
Bright-mailed Ajax, scatter'd with all ease
The Trojan legions gather'd round the corse
Close-throng'd, and making in their hearts most sure
To achieve the fame and bear it to their town.
For one, the son of Lethus, of a tribe
Of the Pelasgians, Hippothous, had caught

The body by the foot, and, with a thong
Binding the tendons at the ankle-bone, 350
'Gan trail it : dear to Hector seem'd the deed ;
But sudden death forstall'd him ; nor, who would,
Could aught to save ; for on him Ajax leap'd
Clear of the throng, and with a home-thrust pierced
Right through the brass-barr'd vizor ; plume and helm
Started in sunder round the sharp spear-point,
Scatter'd and splinter'd by the giant arm,
And liquid from the wound the white brains pour'd,
Mingled with blood, in channel down the shaft.
He yielded up the ghost, and from his grasp 360
The foot of brave Patroclus slid and fell.
Prone o'er the body near the foot he dropp'd,
Dying, from rich Larissa dying far ;
Never requiting to his parents dear
The pains of rearing ; but his life was short,
Under the spear of Ajax there subdued.

Bright spear at Ajax Hector then discharged,
Who saw it, and with sudden glide escaped.
Yet struck it down a son of Iphitus,
Schedius, the chieftain of Phocæa's tribes, 370
Who dwelt in far-renowned Panope,
King of a numerous race. Him full it struck
Under the collar-bone ; the brazen point
Held, till it issued 'neath the shoulder-blade :
He fell, and loud around him rang his arms.

Then Ajax, vengeful, on the belly smote
Phorcyn, a gallant warrior, Phænops' son,
Hard by the body of Hippothoüs ;
And brake the corslet's lower rib, and through
The vitals pass'd the spear ; in dust he fell, 380
Clutching with outspread fingers at the earth :
And Argos with glad shout dragg'd off her slain,
And stripp'd the armour off them, fairly won.

So had the Trojans, of their failing hearts,
Repell'd before Achaia's warlike host,
Fled into Ilion, and the Danaans won,
Ev'n in despite of Zeus and by the strength
Of their own valour and their own right-arms,
An endless glory ; had not Phœbus come
In likeness of the herald Periphas 390
The son of Epytus (who, side by side
With father old, himself had waxèd old
As herald, constant in good-will to Troy)—
In his fair image came the child of Zeus
Near to Æneas, and address'd him thus :

“ Men have I known, Æneas, who, albeit
The hand of Heaven was adverse and their host
Was panic-smitten, yet by strength of heart,
By might of numbers, by their own brave arms,
Have saved themselves ; but ye, tho' help'd by Heaven,
Will of your own faint hearts lose Ilion's steep ! 401
Not to the Danaans, but to you, Zeus wills

The victory ; yet ye tremble thus, and flee !”

Æneas turn'd, and look'd, and knew the God

Apollo, the Far-smiter, face to face

Conversing ; then to Hector cried and said :

“ Hear me, all Chiefs of Troy, and Troy's allies,

And Hector, thou ! If we up Ilion's hill,

Repell'd before Achaia's warlike sons,

Of our own craven hearts now flee subdued, 410

Endless will be our shame ; for at my hand

A God now stood, and told how Zeus himself,

Lord of wise counsel, leans him to our side.

Charge, therefore, charge on still, nor let them draw

Patroclus to their galleys unassail'd.”

He spoke, and sprang the vanmost of their van,

And all in rally stood against the foe.

Then first Æneas struck Leocritus,

Arisbas' son, of Lycomedes' train ;

Whose fall, much-sorrowing, Lycomedes mark'd, 420

Nearer approach'd, and with a gleaming spear

Struck Apisaön, son of Hippasus,

A chieftain of much people, through the ribs

Hard by the liver, slackening all his limbs.

From rich Pæonia he, and of his tribe

After Asteropæus best at arms.

Whose fall Asteropæus sorrowing saw

And charged straight on, and ardent to the fight ;

Yet might not reach them ; for in phalanx firm,

Hedged all with bucklers, round Patroclus' corse, 430
They stood ; whom Ajax traversed, ordering clear
That none behind the body draw him back,
Nor any move too headstrong to the front,
But all around it close in dense array.
Thus Ajax order'd ; whilst with purple blood
The earth was wet about ; for one by one
They fell, first haply some brave chief of Troy,
And then anon of Argos : though indeed
Their deaths were fewer, who kept ever thought
Each to forefend his fellow from the foe, 440
Not wholly bloodless could their battle be.

Like fire the strife raged on : hadst seen, hadst said
Nor sun nor moon were in their courses safe ;
For all about in mist were those enwrapp'd
Who stood, the bravest, round Menœtius' Son ;
Whilst elsewhere all of either host engaged
Under a sky serene ; the sun's bright ray
Was wide dispread ; no cloud was on the field
Nor on the mountains near ; at ease they fought,
Each shunning oft the other's baleful dart 450
Or resting at safe distance. Other far
Their centre's plight, where round Patroclus' corse
Their chieftains in that darkness and close fray
Suffer'd most hardly, bruised by ruthless arms.

Meantime two heroes of renownèd name,
Antilochus and Thrasymed, not yet

Had heard the tidings of Patroclus' fall,
But deem'd him living still, and first 'gainst Troy.
For fiercely, as though boding to their men
An utter ruin else, they waged the fight 460
On the right wing aloof ; so Nestor bade,
Their father, when he sent them from the fleet.

But to those others all that day the moil
Of baleful battle grew more hard ; with sweat
Of their great labour, knees, and greaves, and feet,
And hands, and eyes were spatter'd in the fray
Round the fall'n friend of Peleus' fleetfoot Son.

As when a herdsman gives to curriers' hands
A large bull-hide well saturate with oil
To be tight-stretch'd ; they gather in a ring 470
And grasp and draw ; the moisture with the strain
Exudes, the oil sinks in, and to its size
The hide is stretch'd ; ev'n thus in narrow room
Hither and thither either drew that corse,
The Trojans, hoping it to Ilion borne,
The Achaians, to their fleet recover'd safe.

And such the savage moil around them grew,
Not war-enkindling Ares, nor the might
Of Pallas, though themselves in hottest mood,
Had lightly reck'd the valiant work there done. 480
To horses and to armèd men alike

Most dire the toil that day decreed by Zeus.

Nor yet Achilles knew his comrade's death ;
For near Troy-wall, far from the arrowy ships,
The fight was now. Nor enter'd it his thought
That *he* had died, but still his hope was sure
To greet him safe returning, though repell'd ;
Repell'd—for of the fall of Ilion's towers,
With or without himself, he now despair'd.
This from his mother he had learn'd assured, 490
Who oft her secret errand to his ear
Had borne, the message of the will of Zeus.
But ne'er, of all foretold, had she foretold
So great an evil as had now befall'n,
His death, whom most of all mankind he loved.

Holding their sharp-tipp'd spears above the dead,
Ceaseless they charged and each the other slew
And this the cry in every Argive heart :
“ ’Twere dearth of honour now to draw us back ;
Rather the black earth gape to swallow us here, 500
Than that we suffer to the men of Troy
To win their wish and drag this chieftain off,
Spoil to their town ! Yea, death were better far.’
And thus from gallant Trojans rose the cry ;
“ Though, friends, ’tis doom’d that every man must fall
About his body, slacken not the charge !”
Such rose the cries enkindling all their hearts.

And still the battle raged ; the iron clang
Rose through the pathless desert of the air
And smote against the brazen floor of heaven. 510

Meantime, since first they knew their chariot's lord
Laid prone in dust by Hector's slaughtering hand,
The Steeds, the gift of Heav'n to Peleus' Son,
Held from the battle, ceasing not from tears.
Vainly Automedon their charioteer,
Diores' valiant son, strove, *now* to urge
With quick-plied lash, and *now* with sweet address
Or stronger threat to win them to their speed.
Nor to the galleys on the Hellespont
Nor back to battle would they move, but clove 520
Motionless as a column o'er a tomb,
Yoked to the splendid car, and droop'd their heads
Low to the dust ; whose hot big tears roll'd down
Caking the earth below, mourning the loss
Of their dear lord ; and dust besmirch'd their manes
Falling from out the collar by the pole.

Whom thus lamenting Zeus with pity saw,
Bow'd down his head, and to his own heart spake :
" Most miserable pair ! To what good end
Gave we you twain, immortals and exempt 530
From mortal age, to Peleus, mortal king ?
Was't that ye might partake the woes of men ?
For in good sooth of all that breathes or moves

Nought is more wretched on the earth than man.
But not o'er you nor on your dædal car
Shall Hector mount ; that grace I will not yield.
Is not enow to vaunt him in those arms ?
Rather on you I breathe through heart and limb
A spirit strong to bear Automedon
Safe to the hollow galleys from the fray. 540
For still to Troy I grant increasing fame,
To slaughter, till the fleet be reach'd once more,
And the sun sink, and sacred darkness come."

He spoke, and breathed his spirit upon the steeds.
From their long manes they shook the dust, and bare
Lightly the flying chariot tow'd the fray.
Above them on the seat Automedon,
As shows to birds a vulture, to and fro
Sped battling, though still sorrowing for his lord.
With ease he turn'd to flight the men of Troy ; 550
With ease he drave their rout before the car ;
Yet could not slay them, howsoever near ;
For sitting single o'er those heavenly steeds,
Whilst reining them, he could not ply his arm.
This his brave comrade saw, Alcimedon,
Son of Lærces, Hæmon's son, and came
Behind the chariot, and address'd him thus :

"What heavenly Power, Automedon, hath reft
Sense from thy mind, implanting this fool's rede,
Alone to range amongst the Trojan van 560
Without a comrade ? For thine own is slain ;

Yea, Hector triumphs in Achilles' arms."

To him Diore's son, Automedon :

" Alcimedon, who else of Argos here

Hath skill like thine to guide these heavenly steeds,

Save only, whilst he lived, Menœtius' son,

Patroclus? Fate and Death now hold him fast.

Take therefore thou these glossy reins and goad

To guide them, and let me dismount to fight."

He spoke ; and with a shout Alcimedon

570

Sprang up the car, and seized incontinent

The glossy reins and goad ; whilst off the seat

The other bounded.

Noble Hector saw,

And straight address'd Æneas at his side :

" Æneas, sage in counsel to the host

I mark'd but now, returning to the fray,

The immortal coursers of Æacides

Under base guidance ; and if thou wilt join

We well may gain them, for, who hold them now,

Will not withstand us charging side by side."

580

He spoke ; Anchises' Son obey'd well-pleased.

Together straight they went, their shoulders broad

Shielded with tough dry bucklers brass-emboss'd.

And with them other two, brave Chromius

And heavenly-form'd Aretus ; high the hope

Leaping within them, to slay both their foes,

And gain those proud-neck'd horses, spoil and prey :

Fools ! who would woundless not escape the arm

Of brave Automedon. In prayer he call'd
On Father Zeus, and felt his heart throb high 590
With strength and valour ; whilst, half-turning, thus
To his true friend Alcimedon he spake :

“ Hold not behind me far, Alcimedon,
The horses ; rather let me feel their breath.
For Hector will not from the fray refrain
Ere either he hath mounted o'er these steeds,
And slain us two, and turn'd to flight the ranks
Of Argos, or himself hath vanmost fall'n.”

Then to the Ajax-two and Atreus' Son ;
“ Hear me, ye captains of the Argive host, 600
And, Menelaus, thou ! And leave the dead
In charge of those brave chiefs around him thick,
And come and save the living, and defend
Our evil hour from us ! For hither press,
With their whole weight approaching through the fray,
Troy's greatest, Hector and Anchises' Son.
Yet is the issue in the lap of Heav'n ;
I hurl my spear ; the rest I leave to Zeus.”

He spoke, and waved on high and hurl'd his spear,
And struck Aretus through the orbèd shield. 610
The shield withstay'd it not ; the lance went on,
And pierced him in the belly through the belt.
As when a vigorous stripling, axe in hand,
Hews down a sturdy bullock in his field,
Striking behind the horns and shearing through
The vital sinew ; one long leap it takes

Forward, and drops ; so with one forward leap
Headlong he dropp'd, and in his bowels the spear,
Still quivering up its shaft, made slack his limbs.
In turn then Hector at Alcimedon 620
Sent a bright spear, who yet perceived and shunn'd
The blow by stooping forward ; and the lance
Deep into earth was dash'd with quivering staff
Behind him, and war's spirit spent its force.
Then on each other had they drawn their swords,
Had not the Ajax-twain betwixt them come,
Through the throng hasting to their comrade's call ;
Whereat in fear the others drew them back,
Chromius and Hector and Anchises' Son,
Yet left Aretus there, cleft through the heart, 630
Prone ; whom his foeman, Ares-like in arms,
Stripp'd of his harness, and exultant said :
 " Poor for Patroclus though the forfeit be,
My grief is somewhat lighten'd by this death."
 He spoke, and lifting to the dædal car
The gory spoils, remounted, blood-besmeared
As is a lion, feasted on a bull.

Back to Patroclus sway'd the tide of fight,
Toilsome and tear-abounding, fierce and cruel ;
Which to a sevenfold heat Athene stirr'd, 640
From heav'n descending by the hest of Zeus
To rally to the war Achaia's host.
As is the bow drawn on a purple cloud,

When Zeus portends to mortals war, or clime
Distemper'd, such as mars the works of men
Upon the fruitful earth, and taints their flocks ;
So She in purple cloud about her wrapp'd
Show'd coming, and descending to the throng
She cheer'd the heroes on. First Atreus' son,
Brave Menelaus, she alighted near, 650
And in the guise and voice of Phoenix spake :

“ To thee, O Menelaus, most 'twill be
A byword everlasting and disgrace,
If by the dogs beneath Troy-wall be torn
The body of Achilles' dearest friend ;
Stand therefore, and sustain with thee thy host.”

Brave to the cry of war he answer'd thus :
“ Yea, Phoenix, father mine and elderborn !
Would but Athene grant me strength, and guard
The darts from off me, gladly would I stand 660
And fight for him who by his death hath touch'd
My heart most nearly : but, behold, a fire
Fills Hector, nor his arm from slaughter rests ;
To him Zeus grants the glory of this day.”

Whose words rejoiced the blue-eyed Maiden's heart,
For that of all the Gods he named her first.
On him she breathed in shoulder and in knee
A dauntless strength, and boldness in his heart
Such as inspirits a hornet, oft repell'd
Yet still persistent till it bites the blood, 670
So much it loves the taste ; like boldness fill'd

The heart of Menelaus, imbreathed by her ;
And tow'rd the body, spear in aim, he went.

There dwelt in Troy Eëtion's son, a man
Of substance rich, and brave, Podæus hight,
Of all the people most by Hector loved,
His comrade oft and boon companion dear ;
Whom now the hero of the auburn hair
Smote in the girdle as he turn'd to flee,
And drave the point right through. The arms rang loud
Around him as he fell ; and Atreus' Son 681
Drew off the body, to the Danaans spoil.

Whereat Apollo came to Hector's side,
In image like to Phœnops, Asius' son,
By Hector of his nation most beloved,
The chieftain of Abydos ; in his form
The God appearing spake to Hector thus :

“ Hector, henceforth what Argive fears thee more ?
Whom Menelaus now hath made retire—
A warrior till this day of poor esteem ; 690
Yet hath he singly and unaided gain'd
The spoils of whom he slew, ev'n thy true friend,
Eëtion's son Podæus, brave in arms.”

He spoke ; the other's soul was clouded o'er
With sorrow, and the vanmost straight he went.

Zeus then upraised his sparkling-fringed shield,

And shook it, and wrapp'd Ida's hill in cloud,
Sending his lightnings and his thunders forth,
Portent of victory now vouchsafed to Troy
And panic to Achaia. First in flight 700
Peneleus of Bœotia led the way ;
For as he charged in wonted onset strong
A spear had laid his shoulder bare of flesh ;
At whom Polydamas had cast a dart,
Approaching near him, and it grazed the bone :
Whilst Hector wounded Leïtus, the son
Of the high-soul'd Alectryon, in the wrist.
His hand was stay'd from battle ; round he look'd,
No longer hoping to oppose the foe,
Bewilder'd. But Idomeneus had aim'd 710
At Hector, as he charged on Leïtus,
And struck him on the breastplate o'er his chest ;
Yet snapping at the splice the javelin fell.
Whereat Troy shouted loud ; and Hector aim'd
In turn, as the other mounted to a car,
Yet err'd a little, and struck Cæranus,
The gallant driver of Meriones,
From Lectos, at his side. Idomeneus
Had left the well-bench'd barks on foot that day ;
And great the triumph he had given to Troy, 720
Had not those fleet-foot horses to his help
Been quickly brought by Cæranus ;—who came
A saving light to the other in his need,
But his own self to lose his life thereby.

For Hector pierced him through the cheek and ear ;
Cleaving his tongue and thrusting out his teeth,
The point pass'd downward ; from the seat he fell,
And shower'd the reins about him on the earth.
Meriones upraised them from the ground,
Bending, and thus address'd Idomeneus : 730
 " Lash on the horses till thou gain the fleet ;
Thyself mayst see, Achaia's strength hath gone."
 He spoke ; the other thong'd the glossy steeds
Swift to the ships ; his heart was fill'd with fear.

 Nor by great Ajax, nor by Atreus' Son,
Pass'd it unmark'd, that Zeus had now inclined
The balance of the battle unto Troy ;
This Telamonian Ajax saw, and spake :
 " Now veriest fools might know, Zeus aideth Troy.
Be their spears strongly, be they weakly, sent, 740
They take effect ; Zeus guides them to their aim :
Whilst ours fall wide and vainly dash'd to earth.
Remains for us to take the readiest plan
Whereby to draw this body safe to home,
And our own selves to gladden the dear eyes
Of those who love us with our sight again :
For now with anxious hearts they look this way,
Fearing the might and arms invincible
Of Hector unwithstood till all have fallen
Slaughter'd amongst the galleys. Would I saw 750
Some messenger at hand to bear the news

To Peleus' Son, who knows not yet, I ween,
The evil tidings of his comrade's fall.
But none can I distinguish, nought can see,
In the thick mist that covers all the field.
Save, from this darkness save, O Father Zeus !
Achaia's host ; make pure the air, and grant
Sight to our eyes ; and though it be thy will
To slay us, let it be in daylight done !"

He spoke ; the Father, pitying, saw his tears, 760
Scatter'd the mist, and rent the veil apart ;
The sun shone bright, and all the war lay clear.

Then Ajax said to Menelaus thus :
" Look round thee, Menelaus, chief Zeus-born,
So haply to descry Antilochus,
The son of noble Nestor, still unscathed,
And bid him haste to tell to Peleus' Son
His death, whom most of all mankind he loved."

He spoke, nor Menelaus disobey'd,
But, turning, show'd like lion from a fold 770
Withdrawing, wearied out with long contest ;
For hounds and herdsman all night long have watch'd,
Nor let him seize the fatling from their herd ;
He charges oft, a-hunger'd, but in vain ;
So thick the javelins and the burning brands
Full in his face darted from strong right-arms,
That in his heart's despite he dreads their flare,
And sullenly at dawn perforce departs.

Such from Patroclus Menelaus show'd
Moving most loth ; exceeding was his fear 780
Lest in some panic spreading through the ranks,
The body fall abandon'd to the foe.
Much therefore, ere departure, he enjoin'd
Meriones and either Ajax thus :

“Twin captains of Achaia's host, and thou,
Meriones ! Oh, bear ye well in mind
How gently manner'd was the noble dead,
How lovely and how pleasant in his life
Unto us all—whom Fate and Death hold now !”

So spake the hero of the auburn hair
And left them, and around him cast his eyes
Keen as an eagle's—of the fowls of air
Keenest to see ; far up he flies, yet low
Beneath him doth not pass unmark'd a hare,
Fleet-footed, in a leafy thicket couch'd,
But pounceth straight upon it and bereaves
Its wretched life ; so, Menelaus, thou
Roll'dst thy bright eyes about thee through the throng,
If haply Nestor's Son thou mightst descry.

Whom soon he saw, upon the battle's left, 800
Kindling, bestirring to the war his men ;
And moving to his side address'd him thus :

“Come unto me, Antilochus, and hear
Sad tidings, what I would had never been !
Thyself canst well perceive, O Zeus-born chief,

How Heav'n now rolls destruction on our host
And glory on the Trojans. But withal
The best of us is dead, Patroclus slain,
And great the sorrow on the Danaans fall'n.
Speed therefore to the ships, and run, and tell 810
These tidings to Achilles ; so perchance
He hastes to save the body to his ship,
Though naked now ; for Hector hath the arms."

He spoke ; the other dumb with horror stood,
His eyes grew big with tears, his tongue clave fast
Unto his mouth, his fresh young voice was choked.
Yet not for this to Menelaus' word
Stood he neglectful, but girt up his loins
To run, and gave to brave Laodicus,
Who held his horses near, the arms he doff'd ; 820
So, weeping, and with tidings sad to tell,
Swiftly his feet thence bare him from the fray.

But not to thee, Atrides, Zeus-born Chief,
The heart consented then to stay, and help
The troubled followers whom Antilochus
Had left, albeit the Pylians miss'd thee sore ;
These rather to brave Thrasymed he left,
Himself returning to Patroclus' corse ;
Whither he sped to Ajax' side, and said :
" Him have I found and to Achilles sent 830
Amongst the arrowy galleys swift of foot ;
Yet well I wot Achilles may not come,

How wroth soe'er with Hector, forth this day :
He hath no arms wherein to meet the foe
Take then ourselves what counsel seemeth best,
To save the body to the fleet, and shun
The death and fate in this turmoil of Troy."

To whom the giant Son of Telamon :
"Well hast thou said, Atrides most renown'd !
Stoop thee down therefore with Meriones, 840
And lift the body up, and bear it back
Free of the moil, whilst we still stand, and meet
The brunt of noble Hector and all Troy—
Strong in our country's name, and keeping still
The same brave heart within us, wherewithal
We oft have faced fierce Ares, side by side."

He spoke ; they took upon their arms and raised
The body, clear on high ; the Trojans mark'd
The lifted corse, and shouting on their rear
Charged, like to dogs that on a wounded boar 850
Dash to the vaward of the village-hunt,
And, keen to kill him, press upon his heels ;
But, if he gather heart and turn to bay
Against them, back they shrink, this way and that
Scatter'd and trembling ; such the men of Troy
Show'd, for a while following in fierce pursuit,
Threatening with swords and spikèd pointed spears
And then anon, whene'er the Ajax-twain
Wheel'd round and stood, changing their cheeks to pale,
Nor daring nearer battle to the corse. 860

So, step by step, with earnest hearts, the two
Bare from the fray the body tow'rd the fleet ;
'Gainst whom in utmost fury broke the war,
Wild as a fire that sudden hath arisen
Assailing some great city ; in the blaze,
Widespreading, houses perish ; and the force
Of a strong wind makes terrible its roar ;
So rose the din, unceasing as they went,
Of the proud steeds and tramp of armèd men.

Nathless like mules in stubborn strength begirt 870
On rough path drawing down a steep hillside
Plank or hewn stem to be a vessel's mast ;
Though with the labour and the sweat their hearts
Are faint within them, onward still they press ;
So with set hearts the two still bare their friend.

But in their rear the Ajax-twain held back
The charging foe ; as a bold headland-point,
Jutting well-wooded from an even bank,
Withstands the shock of torrents, curbs and holds
The rush of headlong rivers at its base, 880
Unbroke, unshaken, by their fullest floods,
And sends their waters washing o'er the plain ;
So either Ajax oft would turn, and check
The Trojans all, though near they press'd, and most
Their leaders, Hector and Anchises' Son.

But as a cloud of starlings or of daws
Flee with a cry of panic when they spy
A hawk, the deadly foe of all their tribe ;
So with a cry of panic fled distraught
From Hector and Æneas tow'rd their camp 890
The warriors of Achaia, and forgot
Their wonted valour, dropping at the trench
Their arms, the while of battle pause was none.

Iliad FOUR

THUS, like a fiery furnace, raged the war ;
The while Antilochus bare, fleet of foot,
His errand to Achilles : him he found
Pacing before his long-beak'd barks, and there,
As shadowing ev'n the ill that now had pass'd,
Much moved, and saying to his own brave heart :
 " Ah me ! why thronging backward to the fleet
Come thus the Achaians o'er the plain distraught ?
Oh ! not this day, ye Gods, fulfil the doom
Foretold me by my mother, woe to me, 10
That, ere I die myself, I needs must lose
The best and bravest of the Myrmidons,
Banish'd from daylight by the hands of Troy !
Yet surely hath Menœtius' gallant Son
Now fall'n—Infatuate ! whom I bade forthwith,
Whene'er the ravage of the flame was stay'd,
Return, nor venture upon Hector war."
 Ev'n while this thought went coursing through his
 breast,
The son of noble Nestor stood in tears
Beside him, and the doleful message spake : 20

“Son of the warrior Peleus ! woe is me !
Evil my tidings ; would it had not been !
Fall’n lies Patroclus ; round his naked corse
They battle now ; and Hector hath the arms.”

He spoke, and a black cloud of grief enwrapp’d
The other, who in either palm upseized
Ashes, and shower’d them o’er his head, and foul’d
His beauteous face ; and the dark embers clung
About his fragrant robe. And down he threw
Himself, outstretching all his length on earth, 30
And tearing with his hands defiled his hair.
And all the handmaids whom those heroes twain
Had won in war together, ran, heart-struck,
With shriek and wail in circle to the door
About their warlike lord, and beat their breasts,
And all their fainting limbs beneath them fail’d.
And by him wept Antilochus, yet held
His hands, despite the heaving of his heart,
Lest on his own throat he should turn his sword.
Dreadful his moaning : whom the Goddess heard, 40
His mother, where beside her agèd Sire
She sate within the ocean-depths reposed,
And hearing wail’d in answer ; whom the Nymphs
The Nereids of the ocean cluster’d round,
Glauce, Thalia, and Cymodoce,
Apseudes, Ianeira, Panope,
Kallianessa, and Amphinome,
Speio, and Thoe, large-eyed Halie,

Actæa, Limnoreia, Melite,
Kallianeira, and Dynamene, 50
Doto, and Galatea's famèd form,
Agave, Omythua, Klymene,
Proto, Pherousa, and Dexamene,
Nemertes, and Nesæa of the isles,
Mœra, Iœra, and Amphithoe,
And Amathœa of the golden locks ;
Nor these alone ; but every sea-nymph flock'd
And fill'd the silvery cavern, each and all
Beating their breasts, and Thetis led their wail :

“ Hear me, my sisters, hearken to my grief ! 60
Ah me, most hapless, mother of a son
The noblest of all heroes, to my woe !
Tall as a sapling upward still he throve ;
And tenderly as a plant in some fair bower
I nursed him, till I sent him forth embark'd
To battle against Troy. Never again
Shall I receive him home, never again
Give my son greeting in his father's halls !
Yea, while he still remains to me on earth,
Yet hearken, with what anguish he is rent ; 70
Nor can my going aught avail to help him,
Yet will I go, that I may see my son,
And hear from his dear lips what woe hath fall'n
Upon him, ev'n while resting far from war.”

She spoke, and left the cavern ; with her rose
The others, and about their rising brake

The billows whence they issued : one by one,
Arrived at fruitful Troy, they scaled the strand,
There where the galleys of the Myrmidons
Lay thick about their gallant chief array'd. 80
But by their chief his mother took her stand,
Bitterly weeping, and embraced the head
Of her dear son, and 'twixt her cries and tears
Gave utterance to wingèd words, and said :

“ My child, why weep'st thou thus ? What more of woe
Hath fall'n upon thee ? Hide it not from me.
For surely Zeus hath brought to pass the prayer
Which thou with hands uplifted pray'dst of late,
That all Achaia's sons amidst their ships
Might suffer rout and shame through lack of thee.” 90

Achilles with deep sigh gave answer thus :
“ Yea, Mother, all of this hath come to pass ;
But what delight to me in all of this,
When now Patroclus, my own dearest friend,
Hath perish'd ? Him—him, whom of all my host
I honour'd most, loved as I love myself—
I have lost him ! whom Hector hath slain, and stripp'd
Of all that wondrous terrible armour bright
Which Gods to Peleus gave, a glorious boon,
Then when they wedded thee to mortal man. 100
Yet oh that rather thou hadst ever dwelt
With thine immortal sisters of the sea,
And Peleus had but ta'en a mortal mate !
For now shall sorrow fall ten-thousandfold

On thee, when thy son dies, whom ne'er again
Shalt thou receive within his home return'd—
Nay, nor my heart now prompts me to live on
Or mingle with my kind, unless—unless
Hector first pay me for Patroclus' shame
Ev'n with the bloody ransom of his life!" 110

But Thetis, all in tears, made sad reply :
"But, if what now thou say'st be brought to pass,
Early, O son, my woe, and death to thee ;
For still on Hector's fate thine followeth fast."

Much moved, Achilles spake in answer thus :
"Would I had died that moment, when I fail'd
To save my slaughter'd comrade! He hath fall'n
Sever'd from home and country, and to me
He cried to be the saviour of his death.
And—since thou say'st that I shall ne'er be saved 120
Home to my fatherland, nor here have shown
True beacon to Patroclus or the host
Whom Hector hath by thousands slain, but still
Have sate an idle cumbrance to the earth
Amongst these ships, albeit in fact of arms
(In council others ever have excell'd)
Great as no second of Achaia's sons—
Therefore may Strife perish from heav'n and earth,
And Wrath that fires the wisest into strife,
Sweeter than dropping honey to the lips, 130
But, like a smoke, stifling the heart within!
And such the wrath I nursed 'gainst Atreus' Son.

Howbeit, the past be past, whate'er its wrongs,
All lesser pangs subdued in this extreme.
Now will I forth : so haply may I meet
The foe who slew my friend. For mine own self,
Welcome my doom, whene'er it so please Heaven ;
For doom not all the might of Hercules,
Though dearest unto sovran Zeus, might 'scape,
But Fate and Herè's vengeful anger slew him. 140
So, if like destiny be doom'd to me,
I die my death. Yet may I, ere I die,
Win noble name for ever, and condemn
Many a Trojan, many a Dardan, dame
To endless lamentation, and to cleanse
With wringing hands her delicate cheek of tears :
So shall they know how long my rest hath been.
Then, though thou lov'st me, seek no more to stay
My hand from battle ; for the prayer is vain."
And thus the silverfooted Nymph return'd : 150
" My son, meet this thine answer : think no shame
Thus to defend thy broken host from death.
But all thy beauteous blazing arms
Are now amid the Trojans, vaunted high,
A spoil on Hector's shoulder—not for long,
Nor long delight, for now his death is nigh
Therefore forbear to mingle with the war
Ere I again behold thee in my sight :
The morrow with the rising sun I come,
And bear thee armour by Hephæstus wrought.' 160

She ceased, and turning from her son away,
Address'd her to her sisters of the sea :

“ Into the broadspread bosom of the deep
Depart ye to the agèd Ocean-god
And palace of our father, and to him
Report ye all ; but I will hence to seek
Hephæstus, the divine artificer,
On steep Olympus : he vouchsafes perchance
A glorious heavenly armour on my son.”

She spoke ; they straightway plunged within the main.
Whilst Thetis to Olympus' holy mount 171
Sped, whence to bear famed armour for her son.

She hasted tow'rd Olympus ; but the while,
In clamour such as passeth man to tell,
And flight before the sword of Hector, came
The Achaians, to their ships and shore repell'd.
Nor had their warriors drawn Patroclus slain,
Achilles' dearest friend, from out the darts ;
But steeds and foemen all around the corse
And Hector, flamelike in his might, had come : 180
Thrice did great Hector seize him by the heel,
To drag him back, and loudly cheer'd to Troy ;
And thrice the Ajax-twain had girt themselves
In strength invincible, and hurl'd him off :
Yet he, still firm, well-weening of his might,
Anon amid the turmoil flashing moved,
Anon erect stood, shouting ; nor one step

Retiring yielded ; but, as village hinds
To drive a fasting lion from his prey
Avail not, so the Ajax armèd twain 190
Avail'd not to daunt Hector from that corse.
Yea, he had gain'd it, and achieved withal
Fame infinite ; but Iris fleet as wind
Came hasting from Olympus with behest
To bid Achilles arm, unknown to Gods
Save Herè, who had sent her ; and she stood
Beside him, and address'd her wingèd words :

“ Rise, Peleus' Son, the mightiest of mankind !
To rescue of Patroclus get thee forth :
For him this fearful battle now is waged 200
Before the galleys' front, and either host
Is smitten, *these* defending still the dead,
And *those* the Trojans, fiery-hot to bear
His corse to windswept Ilion ; but of all
Is Hector hottest for the spoil, and hopes
Anon to hoist the head aloft on pikes
Impaled, and sever'd from the tender neck.
Up ! sleep no longer ; shame bestir thy soul !
Thy friend a morsel to the dogs of Troy !
Yea, if dishonour touch him, thine the shame.” 210

To whom the fleetfoot hero thus return'd :
“ Who, Iris, who hath sent thee on this hest ?”
And thus wind-wingèd Iris gave reply :
“ Herè, the glorious spouse of Zeus, hath sent me ;
Nor knoweth of my coming He, enthroned

On high, nor other of Immortal Gods
Who dwell about Olympus' cloudcapp'd heights."

To whom the fleetfoot hero thus again :
"How should I go amid the moil of war,
Whose arms are yonder in the foeman's hands? 220
My mother eke forbade me to be arm'd
Ere I again behold her in my sight,
And promised from Hephæstus arms divine.
Nor know I other man in whose bright mail
I could be dight, save haply what may shield
Ajax the giant son of Telamon.
But he, be sure, himself the foremost plies
His spear in slaughter o'er Patroclus slain."

And wind-wing'd Iris answering thus return'd :
"Full well we know thine arms are with the foe. 230
But moving to yon trench, ev'n as thou art,
Show thyself merely ; and the host of Troy
For fear shall hold them from the fight, and there
Achaia's noble warriors, now foredone,
Shall breathe again—the war allows no more."
And, as she spoke, she vanish'd from the earth.

Then rose Achilles, the beloved of Zeus.
About whose giant shoulder Pallas threw
The fringed Ægis, and around whose head
The gracious Goddess wreathed a golden cloud, 240
And kindled from its midst a steadfast fire.
Like smoke that goeth up from leaguer'd town

Far in some island compass'd by her foes,
Where all day long they wage from off their walls
A baleful battle ; but with set of sun
One after one their turrets flame with fires,
And high the flash darts upward, beacon-sign
To neighbour lands, if thence a fleet may come
Across the sea, and save them—such the flame
From off Achilles' brow pierced high to heaven. 250
Forth from the bulwark to the trench he moved,
There stood, nor mingled with the host, for still
He revered his mother's warning hest ;
But, standing, shouted : from his side, unseen,
Pallas Athenè lifted eke her voice,
And woke unutterable dread in Troy.
As clear above all sounds a trumpet's blare
From some death-dealing leaguer of a town,
So clear above all sounds Achilles' call.
And all who heard that brazen cry, they felt 260
Their hearts disturb'd within them : whilst the steeds,
Forebodeful of their death, whirl'd the cars round ;
And, struck aghast, the charioteers beheld
Flame flashing terrible from off the brows
Of Peleus' noble Son, and still it flash'd
Unwaning, by the blue-eyed Goddess fed.
Thrice o'er the trench Achilles sent his voice,
Thrice Troy and all the nations quaked for fear ;
Twelve of whose bravest, cumber'd in their cars,
On their own lances perish'd. 270

But, the while,
The Achaians gladly drew from out the darts
And on a litter laid their hero slain :
Around whom his loved comrades wailing stood,
And, midmost, swift Achilles ; passionate tears
He shed ; for there upon his loyal friend,
Stark on a bier, and gash'd with wounds, he gazed ;
Him had he sent with chariot-pomp and steeds
To battle, whom he never greeted more.

Then royal Herè sped the unwearied Sun
To sink in ocean, loth, and ere his time : 280
So the Sun sank, and all the host had rest
From onset and the changeful chance of war.

On the other side, from bitter strife retired,
The Trojans loosed their horses from their yokes ;
Yet, ere they cared for breaking fast, they held
A council, all erect, for none durst sit ;
Seeing that Achilles, after long surcease
From toilsome battle, now shone forth anew ;
To whom Polydamas began address, 290
Panthoüs' son, alone in Troy discreet
To look before and after, next in rank
To Hector, born upon the selfsame night,
Peerless in council one, as one in arms ;
He now address'd them cheering words, and spake :
“ Friends, countrymen, hold prudent counsel now :

I bid us to our city—not to wait,
Here 'mongst their ships, and far from our own walls,
The dawn of sacred morning on the plain :
So long as this man's wrath was unallay'd
Tow'rd Agamemnon, easier fell the task 300
Of battle with Achaia ; yea, my heart
Amidst their arrowy galleys leap'd with hope
To fire their fleet. But Peleus' fleetfoot Son
I deeply dread. His all-surpassing spirit
Brooks not the limits of the middle field
Where we partake the battle, but will range
Unsated, till he gain our homes and wives.
Then hearken unto me ; for thus 'twill hap ;
Ambrosial night hath stay'd Peleion's hand ;
But on the morrow, girt in arms, he comes ; 310
And, should he come upon us tarrying here,
Too well shall we discern him. Whosoe'er
Escapes to home, shall hug his very soul,
But vultures and the dogs shall feast on more.
Ill words—may they be distant from mine ear.
But, be ye led of me, albeit we grudge
Retiring, yet this night our strength shall lie
In council ; and the battlements, and towers,
And lofty gates, and the huge panels smooth
Within them barr'd, shall hold our city safe : 320
Then at first daybreak mail'd all in arms
We stand along the parapets array'd :
And ill for him if then he dare advance

Forth from the fleet to battle 'neath the walls ;
So shall he weary, racing round the town
His bounding steeds, and race them bootless home !
But never shall his mighty heart suffice
To win him entry ; dogs shall rend his flesh
Or e'er he so can plunder sacred Troy."

Whom Hector, sternly frowning, answer'd thus : 330
" No grateful sound, Polydamas, to me
Thy voice, who bidd'st us now retire again
To prison us anew. Speak *ye*, my friends !
Are ye not sated of your dungeon-towers ?
King Priam's city was the tale of yore
Through the whole world for wealth of brass and gold ;
All those rich heirlooms of our homes have gone :
To Phrygia or Mæonia's pleasant land
Our wealth hath pass'd for barter : such the will
Of mighty Zeus, who smites us low with war. 340
But now, when great Kroneion hath vouchsafed
Glory to me victorious midst their fleet,
Hemming them hard against the salt sea waves—
Ev'n now—O fool ! raise not thy voice again ;
The Trojans shall not hear whom I forbid.
Hark, therefore, and obey as I give word.
Leave not your files, but take repast in line ;
Mind ye of watching, and each watch in turn ;
And, whoso coveteth to enjoy his wealth
Safe in the city, let him bring it forth 350
And part it 'mongst the people and the poor ;

Better let them partake it, than the foe !
So at first daybreak mailèd all in arms
We raise our cry of battle in their midst ;
And ill for him, if then in very deed
Achilles dare stand forth to save the ships :
So be it : for I will not yield, but stand
Steadfast to meet him : his or mine perchance
To gain the glory ; ever just the God
Of battles, and hath ofttimes slain the slayer." 360

He spoke, to whom the Trojans gave acclaim
Consenting : fools—by Pallas reft of wit,
Hearkening to Hector and his evil rede,
Deaf to Polydamas, whose word was wise !

So there in battle-line they made repast.

Meantime the Achaians all night long bewail'd
Patroclus, and Pelides led their wail :
Who clasp'd his slaughterous arms about the breast
Of the dear dead, and moan'd aloud, most like
Some noble lion lorn of all his whelps, 370
Rent by a hunter from their forest-lair ;
Erelong he comes, and learns his woe, and roams
Through many a brake chasing the hunter's track
(If haply he may find him) fill'd with grief
Infuriate : thus with deepest moan their prince
Turn'd and address'd the Myrmidonian host :
" Ah, vague and wide of truth I vented vaunt,

Then when I cheer'd Menœtius in his home,
Vowing ere long to carry back his son
Laden with glory of the sack of Troy, 380
And wealthy with his portion of the spoil !
But Zeus fulfilleth not the thoughts of man.
For, lo, the doom of both is, here in Troy
To redden with our blood one foreign strand ;
Nor e'er shall Peleus, my old warrior-sire,
Nor Thetis, my loved mother, to their son
Give greeting, but the earth shall hold him here.
Yet, since my death, Patroclus, followeth thine,
I will not lay thy body in thy grave
Ere I have slain thy slayer, and can throw 390
The spoils and head of Hector on thy corse.
Yea, then before thy pyre I vow to slay,
For this my wrath, twelve fairest sons of Troy.
Meantime, here lie amongst our long-beak'd barks ;
And round thee day and night the Dardan dames
Deepbosom'd and the Trojan maids may weep,
Whom by our own right hands at point of spear
We won, and richest cities then despoil'd."

Achilles spoke, and to his comrades call'd
To set a massy tripod on a fire, 400
And cleanse the body clear of clotted blood.
They set the tripod vessel on a fire,
Therein pour'd water, and lit logs beneath :
Up round the bellying cauldron curl'd the flame :
The water waxed hot, and, when it seethed

Within the burnish'd brass, they wash'd the corse
Therewith, anointed it with olive oil,
And closed its wounds with balm nine years in store ;
Then laid it on a bier, from head to foot
Swathed in fine linen-cloth, and o'er the cloth 410
White mantle : thus the whole night long, around
Their chief, the Myrmidonians mourn'd the dead.

And Zeus address'd his sister and his spouse :
" My Herè, broadbrow'd Queen ! Thus then at last
Thou hast fulfill'd thy longing, and uproused
Thy fleetfoot hero ; such thy love, I trow
These long-curl'd warriors children of thy womb !"

To Him the broadbrow'd Goddess made reply :
" Most dread my Lord ! What meaneth this thy gibe ?
Lo, men on one another wreak their wills, 420
Though mortal, and of wisdom not as Gods ;
How then should I, first of the heavenly host,
By right of birth, and eke by place, who am
Thy spouse, and thou art sovran of all Gods,
Not weave my net to wreak my wrath on Troy ?"

This was the commune of the Gods in heaven.

But silverfooted Thetis, Nymph divine,
Gain'd soon the palace of Hephæstus, rear'd
For his own dwelling by the haltfoot God,
Of beauty most transcendent even in heaven, 430
Starry and incorruptible, of brass.

She found him in hard labour dripping sweat
Above his bellows ; for he fashioning wrought
Of tripods a full score, to stand array'd
In range about the stately chamber's walls ;
And to the pedestal of each he made
Beneath them golden wheels, whereon to move
Spontaneous to the choir divine, and thence
Spontaneous to their place return, self-roll'd,
A marvel to all eyes ! So far complete 440
The work ; but not as yet their curl'd ears
Were added ; these now welding and their links,
Constant he labour'd of his cunning craft,
Unknowing, whilst fair Thetis nigh approach'd.
But Charis, mantled in a glistening veil,
The far-famed Haltfoot's beauteous wife, went forth
To meet her, and embraced her hand, and said :
 " Nymph of the flowing robe, beloved, revered,
Thetis, say wherefore com'st thou to our house ?
Long from us hast thou absent been ; but come, 450
Enter, partake of hospitable fare."
And while she spoke, the Goddess led her in,
And set her on a throne, with silver starr'd
Of precious work, and with a footstep raised
Beneath it ; then aloud she spoke, and call'd
Hephæstus, lord of heavenly craft, and said :
 " Come forth ; for Thetis hath some need of thee."
And quick the far-famed Haltfoot made reply :
 " Say'st thou ? Then verily within my doors

Hath come whom most I venerate and love ; 460
Who saved me, when that anguish came upon me
Far falling headlong by the unnatural hand
Of mine own mother, who would fain have hid
A birth so lame ; then had I suffer'd sore
Had not fair Thetis and Eurynomè
(Eurynomè, of circling Ocean child)
Caught me within their laps. For them I wrought
A nine-years' space full many a lovely jewel,
Clasps, and crook'd twists, and flowers of gold, and chains,
Deep in that hollow cavern ; foaming round me 470
The infinite stream of Ocean murmuring flow'd ;
Nor other or of Gods or mortal men
Knew me there hidden, but Eurynomè
And Thetis, who had saved me, only knew :
Who now hath come in visit to our home ;
To fairhair'd Thetis, as is meet, I give
My all, in guerdon of a life preserved.
Set thou before thy guest thy best of fare ;
I lay my bellows and my tools aside."

Speaking, his giant bulk from off the stithe 480
He heaved with halting gait ; his shrunken shanks
Yet bare him nimbly up, the while he placed
His bellows from the fire remote, and all
The tools, wherewith he labour'd, gather'd close
Into a silver coffer ; then sponged clean
His face, and stalwart throat, and both his hands,
And shaggy chest, and wiped them clear of soot ;

Last, donn'd a tunic, and with staff in hand
Limp'd tow'rd the door; handmaids their lord upbare
Fashion'd in gold, yet like to maids who live, 490
In whom was speech and wide discourse, and strength,
And knowledge of all craft bestow'd by Heav'n :
These now did service 'neath their God, who, nigh
To Thetis moved, and took a glittering throne,
Embraced her hand, and spake her name, and said :

“ Nymph of the flowing robes, beloved, revered,
Say, Thetis, wherefore com'st thou to our home ?
Long hast thou absent been ; but speak thy will ;
My heart is quick to do it ; so it be
That which I can, and that which may be done.” 500

And Thetis all in tears made sad reply :
“ O say, Hephæstus, of the host of heaven,
Hath ever Goddess suffer'd in her heart
Woe such as Zeus hath singled me to bear ?
Of old he bow'd me under sway of man,
Me only of my sisters of the sea,
To Peleus, son of Æacus : most loth,
Perforce, I bore to wed with mortal man,
Who now within his home by mournful age
Lies broken. Other woes are yet to come. 510
For he hath granted me to bear a son
The prime of heroes : upward still he throve
Like some tall plant, and as a tender tree
I nursed him, till I sent him forth embark'd
To battle against Troy. Never again

Shall I receive him home ; never again
Give my son greeting in his father's halls.
Yea, whilst he yet remains to me on earth,
He grieves, nor can my presence soothe his pain.
The maiden whom the Achaians chose his meed, 520
Was torn by Agamemnon from his hands ;
For her he grieved, and pined away at heart ;
Until Achaia's host was driven to bay,
Hemm'd to their very galleys' sterns by Troy,
Nor durst advance before their bulwark's gates.
Their old men came beseeching ; glorious gifts
They proffer'd ; but he would not, and denied
Himself to save their ruin ; yet he clad
Patroclus in his arms, and sent him forth
To war, and with him join'd a mighty host. 530
So all day long before the Scæan gate
They fought, and on that day had ta'en the city,
Had not Apollo 'mongst their foremost slain
(Yet after slaughter wrought) Menœtius' Son,
Bestowing all the glory of his death
On Hector. Therefore have I come, and clasp
Thy knees, beseeching that thou give my son,
Though doom'd to early death, a shield and helm,
And glittering greaves with anklets clasp'd below,
And corslet ; since the armour erst his own 540
His faithful friend hath lost, by Trojans slain,
For whom he now lies sobbing prone on earth."
And thus renown'd Hephæstus made reply :

“Be cheer’d, nor let this weigh upon thy heart :
For would that in the coming hour of fate
My power were such to hide him safe away
From baleful death, as now to forge him arms,
The marvel of the thousands who shall see !”

Ceasing, he left her there, and went, and faced
His bellows tow’rd the flames, and bade them blow. 550
Full score of bellows breathed upon the moulds,
And blew their kindling blasts, to every need
Attemper’d, hot to haste, or cold, whene’er
The God so bade, and toil was nigh fulfill’d.
Then brass eterne upon the fire he cast,
Silver, and tin, and precious gold, and laid
Huge anvil on the stithy ; in his right
A hammer, in his left he plied the tongs.

And first he fashion’d huge and massy shield,
And all the surface varied by his craft : 560
But round it cast a gleaming rim, in depth
Three metal folds, and added silvern thong ;
Five plates the targe in depth ; but on the disc
With subtlest art he wrought a fair relief.

Thereon he wrought the heavens, and earth, and sea,
The sun unwearied, and the moon at full,
And all the constellations wreathed in heaven,
The Pleiads and the Hyads, and the might
Of great Orion, and the Wain-named star

Of Arctos, whirling steadfast in his place, 570
Thence watching on Orion, and alone
Unportion'd in the baths of ocean's stream.

Thereon he wrought withal two cities fair
And full : in one were marriages and feasts ;
And brides to bridal chambers by the gleam
Of torches led along the streets, with hymns
Of Hymen piercing upwards, and with youths
In giddy dance ; amongst them play of pipes
And flutes ; and women gazing from their doors.
But in the market-place a throng ; for there 580
Had risen a strife at law betwixt two men
For price of blood : stood, vowing to the crowd,
The one, that he had paid the utmost mulct,
The other, that he ne'er had aught received.
And both desired to close on testimony.
The people, as they favour'd each, still gave
Acclaim, but heralds kept the people back,
The while the Elders sate in sacred ring
On smooth-worn stones, holding such staves in hand
As clear-voiced heralds use, and, one by one, 590
Rose up to judgment and to just award.
But in their midst two golden talents lay
For him whose voice was righteous in the cause.

But round the other city two great hosts
Were couch'd, all bright with arms ; and held debate

Whether to throw it bare to general spoil,
Or part amongst them by apportion'd lot
The treasures in those leaguer'd walls immured.
But not within was thought of yielding ; there
They girt them to an ambush : on the walls 600
Women and children, and the men whom age
So held, stood guarding ; but the rest moved forth,
Whom Ares led, and Pallas, graved in gold
With golden garments, tall and lovely-shaped
As Gods, and towering lofty o'er a crowd
Enwrought of lower stature. So they came
To likeliest ambush, by a river's bank,
Where was the watering-place of flocks and herds ;
There sate them down all-arm'd in dazzling brass ;
Some short space off them crouch'd two scouts, in watch
Against the coming of the sheep and kine. 611
Ere long they came ; and with them following came
Two shepherds joying of their flutes, nor thought
Of guile so nigh ; on whom the ambush leap'd
And cut from all retreat those silver flocks
And herds, and slew the feeders of the flocks.
But when those hosts, who sate before their tents
Debating, caught the din, they mounted straight
Their pawing steeds, and swift to rescue sped.
And soon they battled by the river-bank 620
And dash'd their brazen lances, man on man.
Tumult and Strife were there, and deadly Fate,
In robes all crimson'd as with human blood,

With one man wounded in her clutch, and one
Unwounded yet, but by his feet a third
Already slain she trail'd from out the fray.
Thus imaged, like to living men, they throng'd
And battled o'er the corpses of their slain.

Thereon he wrought withal a fallow field
Of soft fat glebe, thrice till'd, and spacious breadth ; 630
And many a plougher on it to and fro
Drave yoke of oxen ; ever when they gain'd
The border, where they wheel'd, a swain drew nigh
And proffer'd goblet full of honey'd wine ;
Thence to new furrow-line they wheel'd, and strain'd
To gain the adverse border of the lea ;
But all the lea lay black behind them, black
As tilth new-turn'd, though wrought in stubborn gold :
So wondrous was the marvel of the work.

Thereon he wrought withal a fair demesne 640
Deep-meadow'd ; and the reapers reap'd upon it ;
And in their hands keen sickles : down to earth
Successive all along the furrow dropp'd
The trusses, and the binders bound the sheaves :
Three men were there to bind the sheaves ; behind
Came children gathering up the corn, and bare
By armfuls to the binders without end.
But in a furrow, staff in hand, their lord
Stood, silent, happy ; and short way apart,

Under an oak his servants spread a feast 650
Or tended on the offering of an ox,
Whilst women sprinkled all the meats with meal.

Thereon a vineyard he enwrought withal
Grape-laden, graved in gold, but clusters black
Upon it, and the vines on silver poles.
The ditch he carved in dark blue steel ; the fence
Of tin he raised about it : single path
Led through it ; and thereon the gatherers came
To pluck the vintage ; young at heart and blithe,
Striplings and maids in woven baskets brought 660
The clusters rich as honey ; in their midst
A boy stood, sweetly harping on a lute,
And sang the lay of Linos, slender-toned.
They all beat measure to the tune, and came
With skip and skirl, together, dance and song.

Thereon he wrought withal a hornèd herd
Of oxen, bulls of gold, and kine of tin :
Forth to their pasture by a sounding stream
Along a bed of flickering reeds they rush'd
With lowing from their stalls ; engraved in gold, 670
Four hinds came with them, and nine nimble hounds.
Two terrible lions held a snorting bull
Down 'mid their foremost, bellowing, dragg'd to death.
The hinds and dogs were graven in pursuit.
Anon the lions, bursting through the hide,

'Gin lap the blood and offal ; whilst the men
Press on their foe and cheer their dogs in vain ;
Who shun to grip a lion with their teeth,
But off him bark and bay, yet stand aloof.

Thereon withal the far-famed Haltfoot wrought 680
Large pasture in a lovely glade, and flocks
In silver, folds, and roofing-tents, and pens.

Thereon he wrought withal in various art
A dance, ev'n such as Dædalus design'd
Of old in spacious Cnossus for delight
Of bright-hair'd Ariadne : youths in throng
With maidens, fair to win a nuptial gift
Of many oxen,—hand in hand, they danced
And wrist o'er wrist ; *these* clad in thinnest lawn,
And *those* in tunics glossy as with oil ; . 690
And *these* with lovely wreaths, and *those* with swords
All golden, but from silver baldrics hung.
As when a potter, sitting o'er the wheel,
Twirls it with ease, assaying if it run,
So with all ease they ran, and graceful step,
Smooth, to and fro, and ever interchanged.
Around them joying of the beauteous dance
A crowd stood gather'd, and amidst the crowd
Two tumblers sang their songs and plied their craft.

And, last, great Ocean's mighty stream he graved 700

To ring the margin of the wondrous shield.

But when the huge and massy shield was wrought,
A corslet, brighter than the blaze of fire,
A ponderous helmet, to the temples apt,
Enamell'd, and a golden crest above,
And greaves of pliant tin, he wrought thereto.

And when renown'd Hephæstus so had wrought
The arms, he laid them all before the feet
Of silver-footed Thetis ; straight she sprang
Down like a falcon from Olympus' snows, 710
Bearing the heavenly armour to her son.

Iliad XXX

AND Morn was moving forth in saffron robe,
Issuing from out the Ocean-stream to bear
Light to the world, when Thetis gain'd the fleet
With that her heavenly burden for her son.
She found him lying, clasping in his arms
The body of Patroclus, still in tears
Lamenting, and his followers round him wail'd.
Midmost the Goddess by his side took seat,
Clung to his hand, and spake his name, and said :
 " My child, despite our sorrow, yet awhile 10
Suffer the dead to rest ; and well thou know'st
He had not fallen, except by hand of Gods ;
And take these glorious arms, Hephæstus' gift,
Beauteous—no man hath ever borne the like."
And, as she spoke, the Goddess laid the arms
Before Achilles' feet ; each lovely piece
Clang'd, and their clang made tremble all the host
Of Myrmidonia, nor might man uplift
His eyes to meet their brightness, unappall'd.
But, as Achilles gazed, his wrath but wax'd 20
The hotter, and his eyeballs flash'd with fire ;

Yet joy stole gradual o'er him, as he held
Betwixt his hands those glorious gifts from heaven ;
Till of his joy from gazing on their beauty
He lightly to his mother made reply :

“ Arms worthy of immortal craft, and such
As mortal ne'er might forge, the God hath wrought
For thee, my mother ; and I straight will arm.
But much I dread, lest meantime worms invade
The body of Menœtius' noble Son, 30
Creep through the mouthèd wounds, and make their nests,
Shaming the dead (for life hath long-since flown)
With their unseemly work, and soil his limbs.”

But silver-footed Thetis answering said :
“ Let not this weigh, my child, upon thy heart :
Myself will send afar, as best I may,
The indomitable swarms of creeping things,
Whereto the mightiest yield a meal at last.
Though thus he lay a full-orb'd year, his skin
Should still be pure, yea, purer than of yore. 40
But haste and summon to the market-place
The heroes of Achaia ; there renounce
Thy wrath 'gainst Agamemnon King of men ;
Then arm thee, and engird thee in thy might.”

She spoke, and fill'd his breast with courage high ;
Then in the dead, to hold him incorrupt,
Red nectar and ambrosia soft imbreathed.

Thence by the sounding ocean's echoing shore

Godlike Achilles went, with cry that roused
And smote Achaia's sons with wondering awe ; 50
And now ev'n those whose wont it was to bide
Aboard the ships,—the craftsmen, those who held
The rudders, and the stewards in the hulks,
Dispensers of provision to the host,—
These now all flock'd into the market-place,
For that Achilles after long surcease
From toilsome battle now had shown anew.
Two gallant labourers in Ares' field,
Noble Odysseus and brave Diomed,
Moved thither, halting on their spears, possess'd 60
By grievous wounds, and foremost sate them down.
Likewise the chieftain sovran of the host
Came halting by the wound of Coön's spear.
In that full gathering of Achaia's sons
Fleetfoot Achilles rose, and thus began :
 " Better, Atrides, had it been for both,
For thee and me, if thus we then had met,
When with grieved hearts and spirit-wasting strife
We parted wroth, for one poor damsel's sake:
Yea, better had the dart of Artemis 70
Slain her amongst the galleys on the day
I took her, and Lyrnessus fell despoil'd !
So myriads of Achaians had been saved
Who now have fall'n and ground their mother-earth,
Through this my wrath, in death beneath their foes—
Sheer gain to Hector and to Troy ; but long

Shall Argos rue the strife betwixt us twain.
Howbeit the past be past, whate'er its wrongs,
All lesser pangs subdued in this extreme :
I here renounce my wrath, and know my fault 80
To nurse an endless anger. Therefore quick
Arise, and wake to war Achaia's sons :
That once again to Troy's encounter forth
Advancing, I may try them, if they *then*
Delight to take their rest so near our fleet !
Rather I think that who escape to home
Shall sit and hug their souls that they have shunn'd
The onset of Achilles' slaughtering spear !"

He spoke, and all the host acclaiming heard
The wrath for aye renounced by Peleus' Son ; 90
Till Agamemnon from his throne began,
Still sitting, let from rising by his wound :

"Friends, fellow-labourers in Ares' field,
And heroes of Achaia ! Just demand
May he who riseth make for audience fair,
That no unseemly clamour trip his speech ;
Else, whatsoe'er his art, he fails perforce ;
How may he speak or hear ? Mid din of tongues
His voice is broken, though the clearest-toned.
I turn me in the main to Peleus' Son, 100
But hearken all, and lay my words to heart.
Oft have I heard these murmurs of the host
Upbraiding—yet not I the cause, but Zeus,
Fate, and the Furies, shrouded all in mist :

These cast a spirit of wild Sin within me,
Then when I robb'd Achilles of his meed.
Yet what could I ? Sin worketh through all life,
Sin, Power divine, and ancient-born of Zeus,
All-wasting, all-destroying ! Nice her feet ;
She walketh not on earth, but on the heads 110
Of mightiest mortals moveth, ruining men :
Nor only me, but others oft hath snared ;
Ev'n Zeus, supreme adored of Gods and men,
Ev'n Zeus she harm'd, when Herè of her wiles
(A very woman's wiles) beguiled her lord ;
What time in castle-crownèd Thebæ lay
Alcmena nigh the birth of Hercules,
And Zeus thus vaunted forth the birth in heaven :
 "*Hear me, all Powers divine, or be thou God*
 '*Or Goddess, whilst I utter forth my will.*' 120
 '*This day shall Eilythuia, by the pangs*
 '*Of travail, bring to light a child of man,*
 '*Born of the generation of my blood,*
 '*And King to reign of every nation nigh.'*
 "Then Herè of her guile made answer thus :
 '*Tush ! Thou wilt change, nor ratify thy word.*
 '*But swear me, O my Lord, some mighty oath,*
 '*Who falls this day new-born at woman's feet,*
 '*Sprung of the generation of thy blood,*
 '*The King shall reign of every nation nigh.'* 130
 "She spoke, nor Zeus perceived her guile, and sware
A mighty oath, and, after, knew his harm.

For Herè hasting from the Olympian steep
 Soon gain'd Achaian Argos ; there she knew
 The wife of Sthenelus, son of Perseus' race,
 Lay pregnant, to her seventh month arrived.
 Her son she brought to light, a seven-months' child,
 But stay'd Alcmena's offspring, nor approach
 Suffer'd of Eilythuia to her couch ;
 Then bare herself the message back to Zeus : 140
 *" Lord of the thunderbolt, our Father Zeus !
 ' Hearken, I bring thee tidings, what hath happ'd.
 ' Already hath a noble child been born,
 ' Eurystheus, son to Sthenelus, and sprung
 ' Of Perseus, generation of thy blood,
 ' The King to reign of every Argive race,
 ' Thy blood, and surely worthy to be King !'*
 " He heard ; the pang struck deep into his soul ;
 And forthwith of his wrath he seized on Sin,
 Seized by her glossy locks, and strongly sware, 150
 Never again should harmful Sin ascend
 To high Olympus or the starry heaven.
 And, having sworn, he whirl'd her o'er his head,
 And hurl'd her headlong from the starry heaven.
 Thenceforth She moveth 'mid the works of man.
 But Zeus yet rued her ever, when he saw
 His son beneath Eurystheus' tasks foredone.
 As Zeus, so likewise I have found my sin ;
 And, oft remembering my primal fault,
 Then rued it most, when Hector shone of late 160

Slaying us at our very galleys' sterns.
But since the sin was mine, and these mine eyes
Darken'd by Zeus, I fain would win thee back
Atoning by a gift of countless cost.
Rise then to war thyself, and rouse the host.
Meantime I send thee, whatso yestereve
Was proffer'd by Odysseus, to thy tent.
Or, if thou list, and wilt refrain awhile,
Wait here, and hither shall my followers bring
From out my bark the gifts before thine eyes, 170
Worthy of all acceptance and thy joy."

To whom the fleetfoot hero thus return'd :
" Most glorious, sovran chieftain of the host,
Atrides Agamemnon ! As thou wilt,
Or bring the gifts ('twere seemly) or retain.
But now delight of battle be our joy !
Nor let us thus beguile the hours of war,
Nor linger here, our mighty task undone.
Soon shall Achilles once again be seen
Strewing with brazen lance the ranks of Troy ; 180
Like him, let every Argive meet his foe !"

But many-wiled Odysseus made reply :
" Achilles, image of the Gods on earth !
Use not thy valour thus, to push our host
Fasting on Ilion to the war with Troy.
No short while shall the battle be, when once
The armies mix, and Heaven breathes might on each.
Rather first bid the Achaians take regale

Of food and wine aboard their hollow barks ;
For food and wine are strength to weary men ; 190
And who from early morn to set of sun
May brook the brunt of fight without a meal ?
Howe'er his spirit may spur him to the war,
His knees wax heavy, thirst and hunger come
Stealthily, and his limbs beneath him fail.
But whoso after full repast and wine
Battles a long day's battle with his foes,
His heart keeps high within him, nor his limbs
Will weary, ere all others turn to rest.
Therefore we bid the nations to their meal. 200
Meantime let Agamemnon bring the gifts
Here to the midmost market, to be view'd
By all Achaia's host, and joy thy heart.
And let him, rising 'fore all Argos, swear
A sacred oath, that from thy captive's bed
He ever hath abstain'd, nor sought her love
After the natural fashion of mankind.
Thou likewise, let thy heart be gentle in thee ;
And let him feast thee nobly in his tent ;
So shall the measure of thy claim be full. 210
And thou, Atrides, learn from this time forth
Justice, and know that princes, who offend
Against who first offend them, have no blame."
Then Agamemnon spoke, the King of men :
" Welcome to me, Odysseus, these thy words,
Fully and freely spoken to the mark.

Nor loth am I, but rather of myself
Minded to make this oath, not so forsworn.
Therefore, Achilles, howsoe'er thou burn'st
For battle, yet delay, and likewise all 220
The people gather'd, till the gifts may come
Borne from my tent, and, pledges of our faith,
Victims be slain. This charge I lay on thee,
Odysseus, and now bid thee choose me out
The noblest youths of all Achaia's host
To fetch from off my bark what gifts soe'er
We proffer'd to Achilles yestereve ;
And bring the women with them. Bid withal
Talthybius in the camp get forth a boar
To fall, our offering to the Sun and Zeus." 230

To whom in answer spake Achilles thus ;
"Most glorious, sovran chieftain of the host,
Atrides Agamemnon ! Otherwhiles,
Hereafter, when shall be surcease of war
And the hot spirit cooler in my breast,
This task will then behove you with more grace.
Still weltering in their blood and unavenged
Lie they whom Hector, Child of Priam, slew
When Zeus so will'd the glory to his arm.
Bid ye then, an ye will, repast be made : 240
Still call I to Achaia's sons to move
Forthwith to battle forth, nor break their fast
Ere we have ample vengeance for our shame,
But, after, sup victorious ! Mine own self

I vow, nor drink nor meat shall pass my throat
Whilst he, my dearest slain, lies in my tent
Still gash'd and seam'd, his face toward the door,
My people wailing round. I have no thought
To mine own belly while he lieth thus;
Battle, and tears, and blood be all my care ! 250
But many-wiled Odysseus made reply ;
" Achilles, Peleus' all-surpassing son !
By no scant measure better with the spear,
Stronger, art thou than I. Yet I no less,
Thine elder, who have seen and know much more,
Excel thee in the council. Therefore yield,
And bend thy heart to hearken to my words.
A weariness of battle needs must come,
When soon the sword hath shower'd the thickest ears
Down to the earth, and scantier stands the crop, 260
What time the arbiter of mortal fray,
Great Zeus, inclines to either side the scale.
How *can* we mourn the dead by keeping fast ?
Too many fall, too many, day by day,
One after other ; grief would have no end.
No : hurry to their graves whoever fall ;
Keep our hearts hard ; or, maybe, weep an hour ;
And then straight turn us to our drink and food,
Whoe'er hath come alive from out the fight,
So haply with more strength to meet the foe, 270
Clad in unyielding mail to endless fray !
Let none then linger longer, as in wait

Of second summons ; what he now hath heard
Shall well suffice to harm who lags behind.
But forth with might collected, to maintain
Our battle with the charioteers of Troy !”

He ceased, and call'd to follow him the sons
Of Nestor, and, with them, Meriones, `
Thoas, and Melanippus, and the sons
Of Phyleus and of Creon, Meges named 280
And Lycomedes, to the royal tent.
Quick as the spoken word, the task was done :
The seven tripods, and the horses twelve,
And twenty glowing caldrons, brought they forth ;
Seven women cunning of all gentle craft
They likewise led ; and after these, the eighth,
The fair Briseis ; last, Odysseus weigh'd
Ten talents pure of gold, and led the band
Of youths, who, following thence, bare on the gifts
And set them in the midmost market-place. 290

Then Agamemnon rose. Beside the King
Talthybius (herald voicèd as a God)
Stood holding fast a boar. The King drew forth
The knife that by the scabbard of his sword
Hung ever, and from off the victim shore
The first-fruit hairs ; then, lifting hands to Zeus,
He pray'd ; the while the people stood around
Silent, in rank, all listening to their King,
Who raised his eyes to heaven, and spake, and said :

“Thou first, O sovran Zeus, of Gods supreme ; 300
And Thou, O Earth ; and Sun, I add thy name ;
And Furies, ye who deep beneath the earth
Wreak the fell vengeance of an oath forsworn,
Bear witness, that my hand hath ne’er been laid
Upon this maiden, or for thought of love,
Or any due of service ; safe she dwelt
Untouch’d within my tents. If this be false,
May every woe be heap’d upon my head,
Whate’er the Gods decree to man forsworn !”

Speaking, he drew the steel across the boar ; 310
Which then Talthybius heaved and hurl’d abroad
Into the wide gulf of the hoary sea.
Then rose Achilles and bespoke the host :

“Vast of a truth the ills thou lay’st on man,
O Father Zeus ! How else would Atreus’ Son
Have stirr’d my heart thus to its deepest depths,
And madly ta’en this maid in my despite ?
Nay ; ’twas the work of Zeus, who will’d, perchance,
Such death unto the many who have fallen.
Now go ye ; break your fast ; and thence to war.” 320

He spoke, and loosed the assembly. With all speed
They scatter’d every man aboard his bark ;
The while the gallant band of Myrmidons
Turn’d to the gifts, and tow’rd their chieftain’s ships
Bare them ; and part they placed within the tents,
But bade the maids be seated, whilst the steeds
Were driven to pasture forth by gentle squires.

So in her beauty to the tent return'd
Briseis ; but, beholding there in death
Patroclus lying, with a bitter cry 330
Down on his corse she shower'd herself, and tare
Her tender bosom and neck and lovely cheeks ;
And thus at last spake, Goddess-like, in tears :
 " Patroclus ! Ah, unhappy that I am —
My most belovèd ! When I took me hence,
Living I left thee, dead I find thee now,
Thee dead, O captain of the host, and woe
To me ; sorrow on sorrow following fast !
My husband, him to whom my father old
And noble mother gave me to be wife, 340
First I beheld before his city slain ;
And with him three, mine own dear brothers, born
Of the same mother, met their deaths that day.
Yet, though the fleetfoot hero so had slain
My husband, then despoiling Mynes' town,
Thou wouldst not suffer me to weep, but saidst
How thou wouldst make me wedded wife, the wife
Ev'n of divine Achilles, bearing me
Home on his ships to Phthia, and wouldst feast
The Myrmidonians at our marriage there. 350
Wherefore for thee my tears shall ceaseless flow,
For thou wast ever gentle unto me."

She ceased, with whom those maidens wept, yet mourn'd
Each her own sorrows 'neath that hero's name.

Meantime the Elders of the Achaian host
Came gathering round Achilles, and besought
That he should take repast ; but he with sobs
Denied them :

“ I entreat you, if that yet
My loyal comrades list my voice in aught,
Seeing this bitter grief hath fallen upon me, 360
Speak to me not of solacing my soul
With meat and drink ; for fasting I abide,
And fasting will endure till set of sun.”

He spoke, and scatter'd from him all the chiefs,
Save the two Sons of Atreus' royal line,
Noble Odysseus and Idomeneus,
Nestor, and agèd Phœnix : these essay'd
Wherewith to comfort his deep-smitten heart ;
But comfort found he none, or e'er he plunged
Into the opening mouth of ravening war ; 370
And memories throng'd upon him, and he cried :

“ Ill-fated one, of all my friends most loved !
Ah, thine it was of late within this tent
Deftly and with the zest of love to spread
Viands to tempt me, whensoever the host
Bestirr'd them to bear baleful war on Troy.
And now, all stark and gash'd with wounds, thou liest ;
And therefore, though full stores be in my tent,
I fast and hunger still, forlorn of thee.
Nor heavier were my sorrow, though I heard 380
My father's death ; who now perchance at home

Sits weeping for the lack of son like me ;—
And yet for hated Helen's sake in Troy
'Mid a strange people I must battle on ;—
Not heavier, though it were mine own child's death,
The godlike infant Neoptolemus,
Who in the isle of Scyros, if so be
He still survives, is growing up my son—
Not for such evil could my grief be more.
For ever had it been my darling hope 390
That thus to perish far from Argos here
Was my doom only ; but that thou might'st then
Return to Phthia, and convey my child
Secure aboard thy swift black galley home,
And show him all his heritage, my wealth,
My handmaids, and my palace high-enroof'd.
For Peleus hath, I fear, already died,
Or hardly lives at all, in mournful age
Harass'd, and with sad thought, that every morn
Must bring the doleful message of my death." 400
He ceased, in tears, and with him wept the chiefs,
Remembering all deserted in their homes.

Whom, thus lamenting, Kronos' Son beheld,
And pitied, and address'd Athene thus :
" My child, thou failest quite thy best-beloved :
Or is Achilles now thy care no more ?
Behold he sits before the straight-beak'd ships,
Lamenting his loved comrade ; and, whilst all

Now take repast, alone he fasts, unfed.
Haste therefore, and instil ambrosia sweet 410
(Lest he should faint) and nectar on his lips."

He spoke, and kindled in Athene's breast
The love, erst flaming high, to higher flame.
Down through the firmament from heaven she sprang,
Like to some shrill-voiced falcon on full wing ;
And, whilst the host were arming through the camp,
Ambrosia sweet and nectar on the lips
Of the great fleetfoot hero she instill'd,
Lest hunger should assail and slack his limbs ;
Then to her mighty Father's firm abode 420
She hasted back ; whilst forth the whole host stream'd.

Thick as from Zeus fly flakes of snow, borne cold
By skyborn Boreas in an onward blast,
So thick from out the fleet came pouring forth
Boss'd bucklers, stout-ribb'd corslets, ashen spears,
And radiant helms ; the flash shot up to heaven ;
And earth below laugh'd happy with the gleam
And echoed to the stamp of armèd men.
Midmost the dread Achilles girt his arms,
With gnashing teeth, and eyes like flaming fire, 430
And heart by terrible anguish overcome.
There in his fury he engirt himself
All in the God-wrought arms, Hephæstus' gift.

And first about his legs the beauteous greaves

He bound, with silver anklets clasp'd below ;
And braced the circling corslet round his chest ;
By baldric o'er his shoulder then he slung
The brazen brand and silver-studded hilt ;
The huge and massy shield he next uptook,
Wherefrom, as from the orbèd moon stream rays, 440
So stream'd the light ; or as to seamen flames,
In sheepfold upon mountains kindled high,
Show from the ocean, whilst storms drive them forth
Loth o'er the fish-fill'd billows far from home ;
Thus bright from off Achilles' wondrous shield
The flame shot upward ; last, the ponderous helm
He lifted, and set firm around his brows ;
Starlike that plumèd morion shone, and gay
The golden feathers danced about the crest,
Thick-planted in the cone by hands divine. 450

Then of those arms the hero made assay,
If, thus bedight, he yet might nimbly move,
And, lo, they were as wings, and buoy'd their lord !

Then from the case he drew his father's spear,
Huge, beamy ; this no other man might know
To brandish, but Achilles knew alone.
An ash it was, on Pelion's peak highrear'd,
Lopp'd thence by Cheiron for his father's hands,
And shaped, a death to heroes.

To his car

Alcimus and Automedon, meantime, 460
Were yoking fast his horses ; traces rich
Confined them ; bits they thrust betwixt their teeth ;
And to the well-built car they drew the reins.
Automedon then took a glittering goad
Apt to his hand, and sprang above the steeds ;
Whereafter soon Achilles came himself,
Bright as Hyperion in the blaze of arms ;
And to his father's horses thunder'd this :

“ Foals of Podargè ! Her renownèd brood,
Balius and Xanthus ! Take ye better heed 470
Now to bear back your master after war,
Nor leave me, as ye left Patroclus, slain ! ”

To whom replied the lightning-pacèd steed
Xanthus, and on the sudden droop'd his head
Low to the dust, and the mane swept the earth
Falling from out the collar by the pole
(And Herè gave the marvel of his speech) :

“ Yet once again we bear thee scathless home,
Our mighty lord Achilles ; but the hour
Of thy destruction draweth near ; nor we 480
The cause thereof, but Fate and Heaven most high.
Nor to our sloth or speed inert impute
That Troy hath spoil'd Patroclus of thine arms ;
For He, whom fairhair'd Leto bare to Zeus,
Best of Immortals, slew him in the van,
Giving to Hector this renown withal.
Swift as the blast of Zephyr, which they feign

Swiftest of things created, we might fly ;
Yet may not save thee, who art doom'd to fall
Slain by a mortal and a God combined." 490

Nor more ; the wrathful Furies stay'd the voice.
Moved to his heart, Achilles gave reply :

" Art also *thou* a prophet of my death ?
Why this from thee, O Xanthus ? For myself
Know well my doom, that here I needs must die,
Nor see my father dear or mother more :
Not therefore will I slack me, nor surcease,
Ere Troy hath own'd a surfeit of the war !"

Then to the vanmost, shouting, forth he drave.

Iliad XX

THUS, O most sateless warrior, Peleus' Son
Round thee th' Achaïans arm'd them by their ships ;
Also the Trojans, where the plain springs up.
The while, from off the deep-enfolded hill
Of steep Olympus, Zeus bade Themis call
The Gods to council. She to every side
Hied her, and bade them to the hall of Zeus.
Nor of the Rivers, save Oceanus,
Nor of the heavenly Nymphs, who have their haunts
In fountain, or deep grove, or grassy mead, 10
Bode any absent then ; all came and sought
The palace of the Ruler of the Clouds,
And, twixt the marble columns there uprear'd
By art of sage Hephæstus for their King,
Took their high thrones assembled in the hall.
Nor the great God of Ocean then refused
The Goddess, but from out the sea came last,
Midmost took seat, and ask'd the will of Zeus :
" Lord of the Thunder, wherefore thus once more
Call'st thou the Gods to council ? Hast thou aught 20
To weigh betwixt the Trojans and their foes,

Whose war is nighest now to burst in flame ?”

Whom answer'd thus the Ruler of the Clouds :

“ Lord of the Sea and Shaker of the Earth,
Thyself well know'st the counsel of my heart ;
They perish, yet their doom is still my care.
Herè, sitting on this folded hill enthroned,
Joying in sight of you will I remain ;
But ye go forth and each join either host,
Each aiding either as his own heart bids ;
For, if Achilles fought with Troy alone,
Then were no let at all to Peleus' Son,
Before whose mere aspèct they quake for fear ;
Yea, in this fury for his comrade's sake
I dread lest, baffling Fate, he take the town.”

30

He spake, and roused a quenchless strife thereby ;
For straightway, sunder'd in their hearts, the Gods
Went forth to join the battle. To the ships
Athenè went and Herè ; and with them
Poseidon, He whose waves enclasp the earth ;
And He of mind well-stored with wise device,
The Helper, Hermes ; fierce Hephæstus next,
Halting, yet firm upon his shrunken limbs.
These to Achaia ; but to Troy, bright-helm'd
Ares, and Phœbus of the locks unshorn,
And Artemis, the Goddess of the bow,
Leto, and Aphrodite queen of smiles,
And Xanthus.

40

But, so long as still the Gods

Remain'd aloof nor mingled yet with men,
The glory of Achaia unwithstood 50
Rose ; for Achilles, after long surcease
From toilsome battle, now had shown anew ;
And at the mere aspect of Peleus' Son,
Peer to fierce Ares, blazing all in arms,
The Trojans shrank, with knees that knock'd for dread.
But when the Olympians join'd the mortal fray,
Enkindler of the nations, Strife rose high
Midst either, and Athenè breathed the flame
Sevenfold, now standing by the deep-dug trench
Beyond the bulwark, now upon the shore 60
That echoed with her cry. Nor less, adverse,
Ares breathed fire, like some fierce whirlwind black,
One moment on their topmost citadel
Cheering to Troy, anon by Simois' streams
Swift to Kallicolonæ hasting down.

So, quickening either host in dire array,
The Gods encounter'd ; peal'd above their heads
The thunders of their Father ; 'neath their feet
Poseidon shook the earth ; the crested hills
Rock'd, and the roots of Ida, and her peaks, 70
And the whole city quiver'd, and the fleet.
Deep in his nether realm Ædoneus heard
And fear'd, and leap'd from off his throne, and cried
For fear aloud, lest vast Poseidon burst
The earth apart, and bare to God and man

The vasty dismal spaces of his rule
Hateful to ev'n Immortals : such the sound
Rose of the Deities at last in arms ;
Where face to face to Poseidaion stood
Phœbus Apollo, wingèd darts in hand ; 80
And Enyalios to the blue-eyed Maid ;
And Herè to gold-quiver'd Artemis,
Dread huntress, sister-born to Hecatus ;
To Leto, Hermes, he who loves to save ;
And to Hephæstus the great eddying Stream,
Xanthus by Gods, Scamander named by men.

So God met God ; but in the mortal crowd
Achilles most aspired to pierce the band
Round Priameian Hector : with *his* blood
Chiefest he long'd to slake the thirsty throat 90
Of stubborn Ares. This Apollo saw
And straight bestirr'd Æneas on the field
Opposed, and breathed a spirit brave upon him ;
Guised as Lycaon, Priam's noble son,
The child of Zeus approach'd Æneas thus :
“ Æneas, counsellor of good to Troy !
Where now the threats which thou wouldst utter oft,
Boasting before the chieftains o'er thy wine,
Alone to meet Achilles hand to hand ? ”

To whom in answer then Æneas thus : 100
“ Prince, Priam's Son ! Wouldst thou compel me forth,
Loth though I be, to combat Peleus' Son ? ”

'Twere not my first encounter of his spear.
Already hath he driven me for my life
Down Ida, when he came upon our herds
And took Lyrnessus and high Pedasus.
Zeus breathed me strength and speed, and saved me then ;
Else he had slain me by Athene's help.
For nigh him aye Athene moves, and makes
Light all around him, with unerring spear 110
To smite the men of Lelegè and Troy.
Man therefore to Achilles needs must yield,
By whom a God stands ever, shielding hurt ;
Whose dart withal, without such aid, flies straight
Nor halteth, till it taste his foe's best blood.
Yet, let some God but render even the odds,
I would not fear his victory, though he vaunt
Invulnerable armour, head to foot."

To whom Apollo, child of Zeus, king-born :
" Hero, trust likewise thou, and pray high Heaven. 120
Thou, whom they name of Aphrodite son,
The child of Zeus ; but he of feeblè birth,
Whose mother was of Nereus, thine of Zeus.
Bear therefore straight thy pointed spear, nor yield
One tittle, howsoe'er he threats or taunts."

So dauntless spirit on the chief he breathed,
Who, flashing, through the vanmost push'd his way.

Nor then by white-arm Herè pass'd unmark'd
Æneas, tow'rd Achilles making way ;

Around her calling all the Gods, she spake : 130

“Athenè and Poseidon ! Judge ye now
And ponder, in what wise these things shall end.
Æneas, all in mail of flashing brass,
Inspired by Phœbus, moves on Pelcus’ Son.
Or shall we lure Apollo thence, or take
Our stand beside Achilles, granting strength,
Such spirit unfainting, that he may discern
What love the highest Immortals bear towards him,
And know of none effect who all this while
Defend the Trojans through the deadly war ? 140
Yea, for what other cause made we descent
All from Olympus hither, but to save
Him from now suffering aught by Trojan hand?
Enough, enough hereafter he must bear,
All that upon his thread fell Fate hath spun
From the first hour his mother gave him birth.
But if no voice divine explain him this,
He needs must fear before a God in arms ;
For Gods appal, appearing arm’d to men.”

To her the Shaker of the Earth return’d : 150

“Be not thou movèd, Herè, overmuch
With this unseemly passion ; nor let us,
The strongest far, provoke the Powers of Heaven
To monstrous battle. Rather let us move
From off the trodden ways to yon high mound,
Leaving this toilsome moil to mortal men.
But if Apollo then, or Ares, dare

Begin the battle, or attempt restrain
Achilles, or forbid him from the fray,
Justly against them may we raise our arms ; 160
Nor long, I ween, the struggle, ere they flee
Back to Olympus and the assembled Gods,
Brought to such strait and vanquish'd by our arms."

So spake the dark-tress'd Power, and led the way
Tow'rd the high mound, yclept of Hercules,
Heap'd of old time by Pallas and all Troy
To screen him from that monster of the main
Up the seashore ascending day by day.
There with those other Gods Poseidon took
His seat, and in impenetrable cloud 170
They veil'd them ; but, adverse, the Gods of Troy
Took seat upon Kallicolonæ's brow,
Round thee, O Phœbus, glorious in thy youth,
And tower-destroying Ares. Either side
So sate them down, and brooded diverse will,
Yet still refraining from the baleful strife
Whereto Zeus bade them from his throne on high.

Now was the whole field throng'd, and gleam'd with brass
From men and steeds ; earth sounded with the tramp
Of mingling hosts. Two foremost, noblest there, 180
This of Anchises, that of Peleus, son,
Moved each to meet the other, fain for blood.
And first Æneas came, with threatening cry,
Nodding his ponderous helm, with giant shield

Before his breast, and brandishing brazen spear.
Adverse in arms against him Peleus' Son
Show'd like some hurtful lion, hardly press'd
By a whole village hunting to the death ;
Careless, disdainful first, he walks his way ;
But, let some javelin wound him, close he draws, 190
Half-curved, with open jaw and foaming fang,
And groans indignant from his heart a groan,
And lashes either side his flanks and loins,
Spurring himself to battle, fiery-eyed,
Then onward springs infuriate, till he slays
His hunters, or hath fall'n beneath their darts ;
Such show'd Achilles, by his wrathful heart
Furious against Æneas onward borne.

And each had near'd the other on the field,
When thus the fleetfoot hero first began : 200
“ Why tak'st thou stand, Æneas, so advanced ?
Prompteth thy heart this battle with the hope
Thou so mayst reign at Troy in Priam's stead ?
Nay, though thou slew'st me, Priam would not yield
To thee his sceptre ; who hath sons himself,
Is strong of will—no silly dotard he.
Or that, if thou subdue me, Troy may give
Some passing-rich demesne, of wide renown,
Vineyard, and fattest glebe, to dwell therein ?
None knows the hard condition more than thou, 210
Thou, whom I erst have frighted with this spear.

Bear'st not in mind the day, when headlong down
I drave thee from thy herds, escaping sole
From Ida, nor adventuring look behind?
Thou gatt'st thee to Lyrnessus; yet e'en thence,
Holpen by Pallas and by Father Zeus,
I drave thee; when I storm'd and took its towers
And bare away its damsels, spoil and prey,
Darkening their day of freedom. Thee alone
Zeus and the other Powers of Heav'n then saved, 220
But shall not save thee now, albeit, I ween,
Thou so revolv'st it in thine own fond heart.
Rather I bid thee to thy ranks retire;
Stand not persistent till the stroke hath fall'n;
'Tis a fool's part, repentance all too late."

Whom answering brave, Æneas thus return'd :
"Pelides, I as thou can jeer and gibe
Or gall with idle threats; wherefore with words
Think not to daunt me like a weakling babe.
Though neither hath beheld the other's home, 230
Yet well we know each other's birth, for wide
The fame thereof is bruited in men's mouths.
And thee they rumour blameless Peleus' son,
Born of the fairhair'd Thetis, Nymph divine;
Gotten by brave Anchises I make boast,
But golden Aphrodite gave me birth :
Of whom shall one or other wail this day
Her dear son dead; I ween, we shall not part
With baby-words from battle. Nathless, hear,

If thou wouldst have this knowledge and wilt pause, 240
The famous generation of my race.
First of great Zeus was gotten Dardanus,
Who built Dardania ; on the plain as yet
Ilion was not, nor sacred walls of Troy,
But in high places men still made their homes,
On many-fountain'd Ida. Dardanus
Gat princely Ericthonius ; wealthiest he
Of mortal kind ; upon whose meadows grazed
Three thousand mares, and bred their tender foals.
Of these enamour'd, Boreas came, and lay 250
Guised as a black-hued stallion in their haunts,
By whom conceiving, twelve fair colts they foal'd.
These, when they sported o'er the fruitful earth,
Would skim the bearded grain nor break it down ;
Or on the broad back of the sea would race,
Nor from the sparkling billow dash the foam.
Of Ericthonius, Tros, the king of Troy ;
Of Tros, three sons were gotten, Ganymede,
Assaracus, and Ilus—Ganymede
The comeliest of mankind, and rapt by Gods 260
For that his beauty's sake to dwell in heaven
And bear the cup to Zeus. But Ilus gat
One son, the blameless chief Laomedon ;
Then of Laomedon were five begot,
Tithonus, Priam, Lampus, Clytius,
And Hicetaon, flower o' the field of war.
Assaracus gat Capys : he one son,

Anchises ; and from him I boast myself,
But Hector boasts from Priam. This the tale
Of my true lineage, this my father's race. 270
Yet, since most mighty Zeus, ev'n as He wills,
Or makes or mars the valour in a man,
Linger we here no longer, as 'twere boys
Prating, and standing idle in the fray.
Still might each taunt the other, nor, full-fraught,
A hundred-oarèd galley stow the words ;
For words are many, and the tongue is lithe ;
Words change, and roam at random to and fro ;
Yea, that thou speak'st, returneth to thine ear.
Wherefore what need to us of jeer and gibe, 280
Each to revile the other, women-like,
Who, anger'd with a spirit-wasting strife,
Revile each other in the public way
Things true or false, whate'er their anger bids ?
Thou wilt not fright me from my strength by words
Ere I have made my venture—Haste then, haste,
Be our spears quicker to the taste of blood !”

He spake, and on the dread and terrible shield
Dash'd his huge spear. Loud rang the massy shield
Round the spear-point, and Peleus' Son for fear 290
Held it away out from him in strong hand,
Deeming that brave Æneas' shadowing lance
Must pierce sheer through it : fond ! who then the while
Bare not in mind what task to mortal man
To break or quell the glorious gifts of Gods.

The hero's lance, though mighty, might not burst
That targe, but by the gold the gift of Heav'n
Was held ; two plates it pierced, but three remain'd ;
For five Hephæstus wrought thereon ; of brass
Two ; and of tin two, inmost ; but of gold 300
The midmost, and in this the shaft was stay'd.
Achilles then in turn his javelin cast,
The ash by Cheiron hewn on Pelion's peak.
Which, falling on Æneas' fullorb'd shield,
Under the rim, where brass and hide alike
Are thinnest laid, sped joyous on and rent
The bucklers' edge about its point ; for now
Low down had crouch'd the other, and for fear
Above him held the shield ; behind whose back
Passing, through both plates of the targe sheer driven,
The spear fell, idly quivering in the earth. 311
He shunn'd the fatal lance, yet stood as one
Bewilder'd, and across his eyes came shower'd
Trouble of myriad form ; so near the dart.
Furious, with falchion drawn and terrible cry,
Achilles bounded tow'rd him ; yet he seized
A stone, a weight enormous, such as two,
Of men that now are born upon the earth,
Could bear not—he alone uplifting shook.
This had he hurl'd perchance on Peleus' Son 320
And struck his helm or shield, a guard secure
Baffling the blow, but by the other's sword
Had lost his life, had not their plight been mark'd

By Poseidaion, who, beholding, grieved,
And thus address'd him to the Immortals near :

“ I grieve me, Gods, for brave Æneas' sake ;
Who needs must die, by Peleus' Son subdued,
Through that his faith in arrowy Phœbus' word—
Fond ! for not Phœbus shall avail to save.
But judge ye ; shall this man so suffer death, 330
Whose fault is none, for others' evil deeds,
Who to the Gods, the inheritors of heaven,
Ever hath offer'd dues acceptable ?
Rather we pluck him from this evil doom,
Lest Zeus withal be anger'd for his death.
For well with Fate accords that he escape ;
Lest the great race of ancient Dardanus
Be without seed and perish from the earth—
Dardanus, most beloved of all the sons
Of mortal women to Kroneion born. 340

Long against Priam's race His wrath hath been ;
Wherefore Æneas soon shall reign in Troy,
He, and his children's children, to all time.”

He spoke ; but royal Herè answer'd thus :
“ Poseidon, judge thyself, and, as thou list,
Or save or leave Æneas to the spear
Of Peleus' Son, for brave he is and true ;
Nor I assent, nor Pallas, who have sworn,
Before the Gods assembled, ne'er to fend
An evil hour from off the towers of Troy, 350
Not though they fall in conflagration strewn,

Enkindled by Achaia's conquering sons."

Whose word Poseidon heard, and hasted straight,
Thridding the battle and the throng of spears,
And gain'd where those two foes stood face to face.
There first he shower'd a mist across the eyes
Of Peleus' Son, whose brass-tipp'd ashen spear
He pluck'd from out renown'd Æneas' shield
And laid before his feet ; but from the earth
Snatch'd up Æneas, bearing him on high : 360

O'er many a rank of heroes, many a rank
Of armèd horses, imp'd by hand divine,
Æneas leap'd, alighting on the verge
Of battle, where the Caucons arming stood.
Then came Poseidon nigh, and spake and said :
" Æneas, say, what God could bid thee stand
Infatuate in arms 'gainst Peleus' Son,
Stronger than thou, and favour'd more by Heav'n ?
Withdraw thee ever, when thou encounterest him ;
Else soon to Hades, though in Fate's despite, 370
Before thine hour thou goest. But, when Death
And Fate have ta'en Achilles to themselves,
Then with good heart the vanmost mayst thou range,
O'er whom no other man hath power to slay."

He spoke, foretold his fate, and left him there,
And went, and moved the mist divinely shed
Across Achilles' eyes ; who look'd, and saw,
And, much perplex'd, cried to his own brave heart :

" Ye Gods ! A marvel these mine eyes behold.

Here lies my spear on earth before my feet ; 380
And him, at whom I cast it fain to slay,
Him nowhere I descry. Albeit I knew
Æneas by Immortals well-beloved,
This day I deem'd his prayers should be in vain.
Yet let him whither he will ! No more his heart
Will prompt him to withstand me, who hath scaped
His death so nearly now ; and let me forth,
First to give order to mine own brave men,
Then to assail and try the strength of Troy."

He spoke, and backward sprang, and cheer'd his host :
" Noble Achaïans ! Stand no longer now 391
At distance from your foes, but hand to hand
And fain to close, meet every man his man.
Hard were it, spite my strength, for me alone,
One against all, so many to assail ;
Nor Ares nor Athenè, Powers albeit
Immortal, could traverse the whole wide face
Of this array for battle. Yet, so far
As in me lies, in foot and hand, and strength,
I slack no whit, but on them charge, and deem 400
Who meets my spear shall have no cause to joy."

He spoke, and quicken'd all ; but, bright in arms,
Hector against him cheer'd the Trojans on :
" Brave Trojans ! Have no fright of Peleus' Son :
I likewise, were the battle waged with words,
Would fearless face Immortals ; spear to spear
Were peril indeed, for they are mightier far.

Loud vaunts Achilles ; but his words with deeds
He crowns not ; one perchance, or here or there,
He perfects, but drops others, shorn of act. 410
And I go meet him, though his arm were fire,
Like fire his arm, his strength like glowing steel !”

Quickening their hearts he spoke. The Trojans rear'd
Their spears aloft, advancing ; and their might
Thronging they mingled, and their cry rose loud.
Phœbus by Hector then took stand, and spake :

“ Alone against Achilles move not forth ;
But from the midmost mellay, in the crowd,
Await his charge ; lest haply with his spear
He smite thee, or with swordstroke hew thee down.” 420

Reverencing thereat the warning of the Gods,
Hector withdrew him back into the throng.

But forth with terrible cry Achilles sprang,
Engirt with strength of heart against his foe ;
And first Otrynteus' son Iphition
He smote, a chieftain brave, to warrior-sire
Born of the Naiad 'neath the snowy peaks
Of Tmolus in rich Hydè ; on the field
Him first the spear of dread Achilles struck
Full on the head ; the skull was cleft in two ; 430
Loud rang his armour ; and Achilles cried :

“ Marvel of human kind, Otrynteus' Son !
Rest thee, and of thy birthplace take farewell,
Of Gyge's lake, and all thy father's realm,

Old Hyllus' streams, and Hermus' eddying pools !”

He spake his boast ; night veil'd the other's eyes ;
Whose limbs beneath the chariot-wheels were torn.

Against Antenor's son Demoleon

He turn'd him next, and pierced the warrior's brow
Right through the brass-cheek'd helmet ; nor the casque
Held, but the point pass'd joyous on, and brake 441
The skull, and spatter'd wide the brain within,
Quenching his might. And, next, Hippodamas,
Flying before him on his chariot fleet,
I' the back he pierced ; who gasp'd his last, with pain
Bellowing, like bellowing bull by young men haled
Into His shrine who reigns in Helicon,
Whereat great Poseidaion smiles, well-pleased ;
So he with bellowing cry gave up the ghost.

Then after Polydorus, Priam's son, 450

He follow'd ; whom his father from the war
Vainly forbade, the son of his old age,
His youngest and his dearest, and unmatch'd
In Troy for speed of foot ; who for display
Of that pre-eminence vainglorious came
And ranged awhile the vanmost of their van
Till now his life was lost ; for in the back,
Ev'n as he pass'd him, Peleus' fleetfoot Son
Struck him, there where the girdle's golden clasps
Meet, and the corslet falls in double fold. 460

Right through beyond the navel held the point ;
With a groan he dropp'd upon his knees ; a cloud
Enwrapp'd him dark ; and, as he headlong fell,
His fingers closed in death upon his bowels.

Beholding whom, his brother dash'd to earth
Tearing his bowels for anguish of his death,
A mist dimm'd Hector's eyes ; nor could he brook
Longer to hold him back, but face to face,
Like fire incensed, and shaking sharp-tipp'd spear,
Against Achilles moved ; who saw and leap'd 470
For joy, and vaunted loud, and utter'd this :

“ The man is near, who most hath touch'd my heart,
And slew my honour'd comrade ; nor this bridge
Of battle long shall part us as in fear.”

Then with a low'ring brow to Hector thus :
“ Come nearer ; draw thee quicker to thy death.”

Whom helmèd Hector answer'd undismay'd :
“ Pelides, I as thou can jeer and gibe
And gall with taunting threats ; wherefore with words
Hope not to fright me like a weakling babe. 480
I know thee strong, and me the feebler far.
Yet lies the issue on the lap of Gods ;
Albeit the feebler, I may take thy life,
If my spear strike thee—sharp enow of yore.”

He spoke, and whirl'd on high and hurl'd the spear,
Which azure-eyed Athenè, by a breath
Breath'd gently, turn'd from Peleus' Son aside ;

Falling, the lance recoil'd to Hector's feet :
On whom infuriate, and with terrible cry,
Achilles bounded onward, fain to slay ; 490
But with all ease Apollo snatch'd him up,
By power divine, and wrapp'd him in thick mist :
Thrice sprang the fleetfoot hero on his foe,
Thrice dash'd his brazen spear in mist profound ;
The fourth time, godlike, vainly still he came,
With dreadful cry, and gave these wingèd words :

“Thou cur, who now again hast fled thy death !
Ill press'd thee hard ; but Phœbus yet once more
Hath saved thee, unto whom thou needs must make
Prayers endless, ere thou ventarest to the war. 500
Yet, let some God do battle on my side,
Next when we meet, I ween I end thee quite ;
Till then I turn me on whome'er I may !”

He spoke, and with a javelin through the throat
Pierced Dryops, who before his feet fell prone ;
Whom so he left, but stay'd Philetor's son
Demuchus from his flight, a man-at-arms
Mighty and huge, wounding him on the knee
With spear, and hewing then with falchion down.
Laogonus and Dardanus, the sons 510
Of Bias, next he assail'd, and low to earth
Hurl'd both from off their chariot ; one he smote
With spear ; the other with huge sword he clove.
Then Tros, Alastor's son, who clasp'd his knees
Beseeching—(if Achilles might be moved

By pity for an age most like his own
To spare him captive, nor to take his life)—
Ah, fond ! who knew not he should pray in vain :
Of no mild mood nor softening heart, but wild
For vengeance, *he*, whose knees he embraced with hope
Of mercy. Ere he spoke, the sword had pass'd 521
Deep in his liver, and the liver brake,
And black blood flooding up his bosom gush'd ;
And darkness wrapp'd him, and he gave the ghost.

Echeclus next with hilted brand he smote
Full on the head, and all the sword reek'd hot
With blood, whilst o'er the darken'd eyes came fast
The purple gloom of death and violent Fate.

Deucalion next, where the elbow's tendons join,
There with brass point he pierced, hard by the hand : 530
The hand wax'd heavy ; motionless he stood
Waiting the death before him ; through his neck
The blade shore, striking far the helmèd head,
Helmet and all. Forth spouted from the spine
The marrow ; and he lay on earth outstretch'd.

Thence on the Thracian, Peireus' blameless son,
Rhignus, he turn'd, and smote him on the belt.
I' the middle stuck the spear, and from his car
He fell : whose driver, brave Areithous,
Turn'd quick the steeds to flight, but likewise dropp'd, 540

Pierced in the back and dash'd from off his seat
By the sharp spear ; the steeds were left distraught.

As, when a wondrous conflagration wastes
The deep dells of a mountain parch'd and dry,
The forest falls consumed ; a forceful wind
This way and that drives dense, and fans the flame ;
So, spear in hand, with godlike strength he ranged
This way and that, pursuing to the death ;
And the earth ran with blood. And, as in yoke
Broad-fronted oxen tread white barley out 550
On smooth-built threshing-floor, and underfoot
Lightly the chaff flies off ; so 'neath the hoofs
Of his swift heavenly horses spears and shields
Were trodden, and the bodies of the dead ;
With blood the axle and with blood the rails
Were spatter'd, plash'd from 'neath the whirling spokes
Or off his coursers' heels ; with gory hands,
Ardent for fame, invincible, he roved !

Iliad XXX

BUT, when they gain'd the ford of that full stream,
Xanthus, own offspring of immortal Gods,
He sunder'd them in twain, and part he drave
Back tow'rd their town, across the selfsame field
O'er which the yester-eve the Achaïans fled
In panic by the might of Hector's spear.
But now along it pour'd the Trojan rout,
Across whom Herè drew bewildering mist
To stay them. But their other part were roll'd
Down to the deep and silvery-eddying stream. 10
They plunged therein, and from the echoing banks
The crash of splash'd and broken waters rose ;
Whilst they tumultuous to and fro were toss'd
Swimming amongst the eddies. As a swarm
Of locusts, by the scorch of fire constrain'd
To refuge in a river, know the flame
Burning unwearied, where it sudden rose
Behind them, and beneath the waters plunge ;
Thus by Achilles' arm was that deep stream
Of eddying Xanthus choked with men and steeds. 20
Then in a tamarisk-bush he left his spear,

And, sword alone in hand, leap'd likewise in,
Godlike, and furious unto deeds of death,
And smote them right and left. Their groans arose
Unceasing, and the stream ran red with blood.
Ev'n as a shoal of fish before a shark
Huddle in fear, and crowd some harbourage
In to its inmost corners, for his mouth
Gapes to engulf whatever he may reach ;
So crouch'd the Trojans, cowering 'neath the bluffs 30
Of that dread River, mingled with his stream.

But when his arm was weary of their deaths,
Twelve youths he chose, and took from out the waves,
The offering destin'd to Patroclus' tomb.
Like fawns half dead for fear, he drew them out
And bound behind them with the clean-cut thongs
Of their own rope-twined corslets either hand,
And gave them, to the galleys to be ta'en ;
But sprang himself, still fain for slaughter, back.

A son of Dardan Priam first he reach'd, 40
Lycaon, mounting from the stream ; whom erst
Upon his father's threshing-floor he caught
Most unaware ; for sudden in the night
He came, and found him pruning with sharp axe
The young shoots off a fig-tree stem, to be
The felloes to his chariot : on him there—
Sorrow undream'd of—dread Achilles fell,

And, as to serve my song, aboard his bark
Bare him to populous Lemnos o'er the sea ;
Where Euneus, son of Jason, paid his price ; 50
But rich Eëtion soon, his father's friend,
Redeem'd and sent him to Arisbe safe ;
Thence he escaped and gain'd his father's house.
With his dear friends eleven happy days
After return from Lemnos had he pass'd ;
But on the twelfth Heav'n cast him yet once more
Before Achilles, to be sent this while,
How loth soever, down to Hades' realm.

For when the fleetfoot hero first perceived
And knew him, naked of his helm and shield 60
And spearless (for his arms were cast away ;
The toil had tired him climbing from the stream,
His limbs beneath were failing for fatigue),
Much troubled, to his own brave heart he said :
 " Ye Gods ! A marvel these mine eyes behold.
I well may think that every Trojan brave,
Slain by my hand, from out the misty West
May rise in resurrection to the war ;
As this man hath, who once escaped the hour
Of ruthless death, and to the beauteous isle 70
Lemnos was borne, and sold : him the broad gulf
Of hoary Ocean hath not stay'd, which stays
So many, though desirous. Let him taste
My spear this time, that I may see and know

Whether *thence* likewise he can make his way,
Or whether fruitful earth can hold him down,
Earth, who holds down the bravest in their graves."

Such thoughts he ponder'd, whilst the other drew
Nigher, half dead for fear, and sought to clasp
Achilles' knees, for all his heart was set, 80
If peradventure he might 'scape black Fate.
Noble Achilles had upraised his lance
Ready to strike, when he beneath it ran
And stoop'd, and caught his knees ; behind his back,
Quivering, and longing for the taste of blood,
The sharp-tipp'd spear stood, stuck in earth ; and he
Gripp'd it with one hand, nor would let it go ;
But with the other by the knees besought
Achilles, and entreating spake and said :

" I clasp thy knees, Achilles ; oh, revere 90
Thy suppliant, and show mercy ! Yea, I stand
Ev'n as a suppliant whom thou must revere—
Who at thy table brake thy bread, when first,
Taking me from the smooth-built threshing-floor,
Thou bar'st me to rich Lemnos o'er the seas,
Far from my father and from all I loved.
A hundred head of oxen then I brought ;
But now a ransom thrice as great were mine.
This is the twelfth morn only, since I came
To Ilion, after heaviest sufferings saved : 100
Again fell Fate hath thrown me in thy hands.
I needs must be a hate to Father Zeus

For that He thus hath given me to thy spear.
To short, short life Laothoë bare her son,
My mother, agèd Altes' royal child
(Altes, who rules the brave Lelegian tribes,
On rocky Pedasus, by Satnoeis' stream,
His daughter Priam had, and many more) ;
Two sons she bare, and both will fall by thee.
Already, ranging in the foremost ranks, 110
One hast thou struck, the godlike Polydore ;
And now on me the selfsame evil falls.
My fate it is, and scarce may I escape !
Yet spare me, and remember this one thing ;
Not of that womb am I, whence Hector sprang,
And Hector was the slayer of thy beloved."
So pray'd King Priam's Son, and knelt
Beseeching, but no honey'd answer took :
" Cease, fool, nor prate to me of ransom more !
Ere on himself Patroclus brought his fate, 120
It liked me well to spare the lives of Troy,
And many a captive o'er the narrow seas
I took, and sold to slavery : now not one,
Thrown by the Gods before proud Ilion's walls
Into these hands, shall live to tell the tale—
Least of all men, be that man Priam's son !
Die then, my friend ; why mak'st thou much ado ?
Better than thou have died ; Patroclus died.
Nay, seest thou me, how glorious and how great,
Born of a Goddess, gotten by a King ? 130

Yet ev'n on me shall Death and a violent Fate
Fall, on some morn, or noon, or dewy eve,
Then when my enemy takes my life at last,
By spearcast, or by arrow from the string."

He spoke : the other's limbs sank, and his heart ;
He dropp'd the spear, and sate with outstretch'd hands.
Achilles drew his sword and through the neck
Hard by the collar smote him ; and the blade
Pass'd on within, and prone on earth he lay
Senseless ; the blood gush'd black and dyed the strand. 140
Whom then Achilles, seizing by the foot,
Hurl'd to be borne upon the stream away,
And vaunting o'er him spake these wingèd words :

" Thither, to bed with fishes, who shall lick
The blood from off thy wound, without a tear !
But ne'er thy mother on thy couch shall lay
Or mourn thee, but Scamander whirls thee out
Into the broadspread bosom of the sea.
Yea, fattening on Lycaon's dainty flesh,
The fish shall skim for joy the crispèd waves. 150
So may ye perish, till we reach your walls,
Ye fleeing, and I slaughtering in pursuit :
Nor shall this smooth and silvery-eddyng Stream
Save ye, albeit ye oft have offerings made
Of bulls and living horses to his pools.
Still, still, howe'er it please him, die ye on,
Die evil deaths, till every man hath rued
Patroclus, and that slaughter of the host

Amongst the galleys in my absence long !”

He spoke ; the River wax'd in wrath, and 'gan 160
Ponder how best to stay from these fell deeds
Achilles, and defend the men of Troy.

Pelides then took shadowing spear in hand
And on Asteropæus sprang to slay :
Asteropæus, son of Pelegon ;
But Pelegon was son of Axius' Stream
By womb of Peribœa, eldest child
Of Accessamenus. On their son's son
Achilles sprang ; but he from out the stream
Arose to meet him, spear in either hand ; 170
For Xanthus, anger'd for the brave men's sake
Kill'd without ruth by Peleus' mighty Son
In his mid waters, breathed upon him strength.
And each had near'd the other on the field
When thus the fleetfoot hero first began :

“Who and whence art thou, who hast dared to stand ?
Fathers are childless if their sons meet me.”

To whom the noble Son of Pelegon :
“Wherefore doth Peleus' Son inquire my birth ?
From the far rich Pæonian land I come 180
With the Pæonian spearmen ; this day dawns
The eleventh since I came to Ilion's towers.
Of Axius, broad-flowing stream, I boast my birth,
Of the most bounteous river of the world :
He gat brave Pelegon, and Pelegon

I name my father—Let us now to arms !”

Threatening he spoke ; Achilles raised on high
The Pelion-ash ; but first the other cast
Both spears (for either hand was as his right)
Together : with the one he struck the shield, 190
Yet pierced not through—the gold the gift of Heaven
Withstood it : with the other razed he off
The skin o’ the elbow o’ the better arm
And drew black-dropping blood ; the lance beyond
Quiver’d in earth, as longing for its prey.
In turn Achilles sent an eager lance ;
But err’d, and struck the bank behind, wherein
Up to its centre plunged the ashen staff.
Then the sharp falchion from his hip he drew,
And sprang upon his foe ; who vainly then 200
Sought to pluck out Achilles’ ashen lance
From the steep bluff. He could not ; thrice he strain’d
His strength to draw it, shook it thrice, and thrice
Yielded perforce ; the fourth time only strove
To bend and snap the shaft ; but, ere he bent,
Achilles with his sword had reft his life,
Smiting him by the navel through the belt ;
And all the bowels came gushing out to earth ;
He gasp’d his last, and darkness veil’d his eyes.
Whilst the other leapt upon his chest, and stripp’d 210
His armour, and above him vaunting cried :
“ So rest thee ! Task it were for River’s Son
To stand in arms against a child of Zeus.

Thou from a flowing Stream didst vaunt thyself ;
But I my generation draw from Zeus.
Peleus my father, son of Æacus,
King of the Myrmidons, but Æacus
Was son of Zeus ; and as is Zeus, great Zeus,
Unto the Rivers rolling to the sea,
So are His offspring to a River's Sons. 220
Yea, could he aught avail thee, at thy side
A mighty River flows ; but who may rise
Rebel against Kroneion ? Not the stream
Of lordly Acheloius ; not the might
Of earth-embracing Ocean, from whose source
Seas, rivers, fountains, and deep wells, are pour'd ;
Not He durst stand before the bolt of Zeus
Or the dread thunder rattling from the skies."

He spoke, and pluck'd his lance from out the bank,
And left him lying there, bereft of life, 230
Upon the sands ; black o'er him wash'd the waves,
And round him snake and fish flock'd busy soon
To gnaw the tenderest morsels off his flesh.
Upon whose plumed Pæonian troop then turn'd
Pelides ; these stood huddled on the bank,
For that they saw their best-in-arms subdued
Under Achilles' hand and conquering sword.
Ænius, and Mygdon, and Thersilochus,
Thrasius, and Merus, and Astipylus,
And Ophelestes, one by one, he slew. 240

Yea, and yet more had perish'd by his arm,
Had not the River risen in his wrath,
With mortal voice, from gulf profound, and said :
 " Monstrous, beyond the might of man, these deeds,
Achilles, and the Gods sustain thee still.
Yet, though it be the will of Zeus supreme
That to a man thou slay this host of Troy,
First drive them from my channel ; on the plain
Fulfil thy bloody work. For, lo, my streams,
My gentle streams, are choked with corpses up, 250
Nor, straiten'd by these dead, find I a path
To pour my waters to the sacred sea ;
And still thou spread'st around thee utter death.
Stay then thy hand ; suffer their flight awhile ;
Aghast I stand, dread hero, at thy work."
Whom answering, Peleus' fleetfoot Son replied :
" As thou mayst bid, Scamander, Child of Zeus,
Hereafter be it so ; but now no let
I suffer to the slaughter of haught Troy,
Ere I have driven them in, and made assay 260
Of Hector, hand to hand, to win or die."
He spoke, and, peer to Gods, charged onward still.

Then to Apollo thus the whirling Stream :
" Lord of the silver bow, and Child of Zeus !
Thou keep'st not well the counsels of thy Sire ;
For strong on thee He laid the charge, to stand
Beside the Trojans, and sustain them still,

Till eve come shadowing all the fruitful earth."

Scarce had he ended, when Achilles plunged
Off the sheer bank into his very midst, 270
On whom the River rose, and, foaming, surged
High swollen, and with murmurs deep upheaved
Against him all his floods ; and thrust aside
The corpses that were thick within his waves,
The many whom Achilles there had slain ;
These toss'd he off him, bellowing like some bull,
High on the dry ; but all the living rout
He saved, for, deep behind the eddying pile
Of waters, from his sword he hid them screen'd.
So thundering o'er Achilles stood upcurl'd 280
The flood—anon in avalanche on his shield
Dash'd down ; nor could his feet upstay his step,
But, hand by hand, he caught an elm, fair-grown,
Large-bough'd ; and all the trunk uprooted fell
Cleaving the bank beneath it ; broad it lay
Thwart o'er the limpid stream with foliage spread
And falling bridged the channel : whence he sprang
From out the waters, and with nimble foot
Fled panic-stricken o'er the plain. Nor so
Would cease the mighty River, but, in wrath, 290
High, blackening tow'rd the summit, o'er him surged,
For that he now would stay the hero's hand
From battle, and from Troy forefend the death.
From whom Pelides sprang, and every spring
Bare him a spear's-cast onward, for his swoop

Was as a black-plumed eagle's on his prey,
Swiftest and strongest of the fowls of air :
So sped he, and the armour on his breast
Clang'd terrible ; with neck inclined he fled,
But still the River after, roaring, came. 300
As when some gardener from black-bubbling well
Through lawn and orchard, spade in hand, conducts
His channel, casting out what dams the flow ;
The pebbles then are ruffled by the brook
Before him, but behind the waters purl,
Pour'd swiftly down the gentle slope, and still
Outrun his hand who guides them ; so the waves
Outran Achilles' heel : of mortal men
He swiftest ; but what man is peer to Gods ?
And, if at times he faced it, brought to bay— 310
Erect, and resolute to know if all
The Immortal Powers of Heav'n had now one will
To quell him—then the Godsprung River's floods
Beat stronger, and his shoulders struck awry.
Again, with chafing heart, he turn'd and fled,
Vainly ; for now the currents of the stream
Slacken'd his knees and swept away the sands
Under his tottering tread. Whereat, with eyes
Uplifted tow'rd broad Heav'n, he groan'd forth this :
“ O Zeus ! on thee I call, great Sire, for, lo, 320
No God is near to pluck me (woe is me)
Safe from this death—oh, save me, and let come
Hereafter what come may ! Nor blame of this

To other of Immortals, but to her
My mother, who with lying words beguiled
Her son, foretelling death hereafter doom'd,
To fall beneath the walls of armèd Troy,
Slain only by divine Apollo's shaft.
Liever than this had Hector struck me dead—
The noblest and the bravest of his race ; 330
Then had a brave man slain as brave a foe.
But now behold me mesh'd within the net
Of vilest death, to perish overborne
By this strong stream, like any swineherd's boy,
Drown'd by a winter-torrent at a ford !”

He pray'd, and to his prayer forthwith appear'd
Poseidon and Athene, guised like men,
And gave their hands sustaining to his hands,
Strengthening his heart, Poseidon speaking thus :
“Fear not, thou Son of Peleus, overmuch, 340
Nor be thou troubled, whatsoe'er befall.
For, lo, we twain are near thee, of the Gods
Thy guardians by the sanction of high Zeus—
Myself who speak, and Pallas. Not thy fate
To sink below a River overcome :
Thyself shalt see him bow this lofty front.
Obey us, and we hereby gage our faith ;
Thou shalt not from the changeful fray refrain
Ere within Ilion's farfamed walls thou chase
Yon fugitive Trojan host, nor thence return 350
Ere thou hast reft the life of Hector : this

The glory that we grant thee to attain."

They spoke, and pass'd away amongst the Gods.
But he, enkindled by the word divine,
Sprang onward o'er the plain ; and all the plain
Was flooded with such torrent, that thereon
Floated the shining armour of slain men
Mix'd with the dead. Nathless his lifted limbs
Bare him now straight against the stream, nor all
The strong tide of the River stay'd him more ; 360
So vast the vigour by Athene breathed.

But not Scamander therefore 'gan abate
His fury ; but, the more incensed, his waves
Towering against Pelides to a crest
Heaved high, and loudly thus on Simois call'd :
" Join me, my brother ; though our foe be man,
Join me to stay him. Else he soon despoils
The palaces of Priam, nor can Troy
Withstand his onset in this dread assail.
Haste therefore to the rescue ! From thy founts 370
O'erflood thy stream with waters, and invoke
Thy torrents : huge aloft thy billows rear,
And stir tempestuous hurtle of thy crags,
With me to stay this wild mad man of blood,
Who ranges now triumphant, and with wrath
Peer to a God infuriate. Then, I ween,
Not all his might nor beauty, nor yon arms
Resplendent shall avail him ; low in slime

Engulf'd beneath our waters those bright arms
Shall lie ; himself in sands I swathe far-sunk ; 380
And silt and rock ten thousand fathom deep
Showering, I fold him in such stony shroud,
Ne'er shall his people gather up his bones ;
But there the pillar of my rocks shall rise,
That, when the Achaïans give him funeral due,
They shall not need the toil to pile his cairn."

He ended, and against Achilles sprang
With murmurs hoarse, and furious crest upheaved,
Commingled with the slain and foam and blood.
High-lifted in one purple billow rose 390
The God-sprung River, and had borne him down ;
But Herè, fearing for his life, lest now
The whirling flood should sweep him sheer away,
Loud on her son Hephæstus call'd, and said :

" Arise, my child, the Haltfoot ! Worthy foe,
The whirling Xanthus, we design to thee.
Put forth thy flames to battle ; and myself
Will call from off the sea a sudden breeze
Of Zephyr and the summery western Wind,
To waft the deadly blast on arms and men 400
And utterly consume their host with fire.
But thou destroy the trees beside his banks,
And wrap him all in flames ; nor be thou swerved
One jot for gentle word or gallant deed,
Nor, ere thou hear me lift my voice aloud
Cease burning ; then withhold thy sateless fires."

She spoke ; and to her hest Hephæstus aim'd
His flames divine. They first along the plain
Ran, licking up the corpses floating there,
The many whom Achilles there had slain. 410
The plain was dried, and the bright waters stay'd.
Like to some vineyard wet with autumn rains,
Dried by one breath of Boreas, to his joy
Who tends it ; thus that plain was dried, and all
The dead thereon consumed. Anon the God
Turn'd on the River the wide-glittering blaze :
Then all that grew beside the limpid tide,
Elm, poplar, tamarisk, lotus, rush, and reed,
All fell in conflagration ; and whate'er
Was wont within his eddies to and fro 420
To gambol, snake and fish, in lucid stream,
Were tortured by that breathing of the God ;
And ev'n the River, scalded, cried and said :
 "Hephæstus, none against thee stands thy peer,
Thus blazing in thine elemental fires.
With thee I war no longer. Cease ! oh, cease !
And let him, if thou list, this very day
Drive the whole nation from their homes exiled ;
For what to me the battle or their cause ?"
He spoke, with waves that leap'd and hiss'd in flame :
As caldron, under stress of violent fire 431
And fuel of dry logs beneath it heap'd,
In seething of the flesh of fatten'd boar
Boils up with waters leaping round its rim ;

So then, those limpid streams with fire incensed,
The waters boil'd, nor roll'd a further tide,
But stood and steam'd in anguish by the might
Of that wise-witted Power : whereat the Stream
With wingèd words of prayer on Herè call'd :

“ Wherefore, O Herè, bidd'st thy son assail 440
Me only to such torment ? Not to me
So large the blame, as to the other Powers
Who war for Troy. But, if thou so desire,
I war no longer. Let him likewise cease ;
And I will swear never again to move
For Ilion, not though all her roofs should blaze,
Enkindled by Achaia's conquering sons.”

He spoke ; the Goddess of the milkwhite arm
Heard, and address'd her son Hephæstus then :

“ Now stay thee, glorious Child ! It likes me not 450
To pain Immortal so for mortal's sake.”

Nor more. Hephæstus quench'd his heavenly flames :
The waves return'd within their equal bed ;
And, Xanthus so subdued, the two had peace,
Appeased by Herè, though herself in wrath.

But on the other Gods Strife fell, most sore,
Most baleful ; as their hearts to either side
Were sway'd within them. With loud clash they met :
The broad earth echoed under, and above
Heav'n rang as with a trumpet's sound ; but Zeus 460
Listening serene on th' high Olympian throne

Sate, and for joy laugh'd to his own great self,
Beholding God charge God in shock of arms.
Nor long they stood asunder ; Ares led,
Hide-piercing Ares, brazen spear in hand ;
He on Athenè sprang, upbraiding thus :
 " Shameless ! Of thine immeasurable strength
O'erweening, by thy haughty soul elate !
Compell'st thou thus again the Gods to war ?
Bear'st thou in mind the day when thou inspiredst 470
Tydides Diomed to wound me sore,
And thine own self, before the common eye,
Guidedst his spear, to pierce me through my skin ?
Full now, I trow, the reckoning thou shalt pay ! "

He spoke, but on the wondrous Ægis smote,
The Ægis, scathless ev'n to bolts of Zeus ;
On this the God of War but dash'd his spear.
Then She, a little space withdrawn, uptook
In her broad palm a stone, that chanced to lie
Near on the plain, black, jaggèd, and immense, 480
Set there to bound a field in olden days ;
Full on the neck with this she struck the God
And loosed the limbs beneath him ; prone he fell,
His length seven roods outstretch'd ; about him clash'd
His armour ; and his locks lay smirch'd in dust.
And clear Athenè's laugh triumphant rang
Above him, and her wingèd words she spake :
 " Fool ! Hadst thou erst not knowledge of my might,
How far beyond thine own, that thus thou daredst

To set thyself against me ? This hath fall'n, 490
The vengeance by the Furies for the sake
Of thine own mother now of thee required,
Whose wrath is heavy upon thee, for that thou
Hast left the Achaians, and hast holpen Troy !"
She spoke, and turn'd aloof her shining eyes.

But Zeus-born Aphroditè took his hand,
And led him, barely yet regathering sense,
Groaning and moaning, off : whom Herè mark'd,
The Goddess of the milkwhite arm, and thus
In wingèd accents to Athenè spake : 500

"The wanton ! Seest thou, Daughter of great Zeus,
Goddess unvanquish'd ! how yon shameless one
Leads off the deadly field the slaughterous might
Of Ares ? Follow thou, and overcome !"

She spoke ; and after those Athenè sped,
With heart exultant, and approaching drave
A heavy hand on Aphroditè's breast,
Loosing at once her spirit and her limbs.
So the twain lay, on fruitful earth outstretch'd,
Whilst She above them vaunted loud, and said : 510

"And like to these be whosoe'er for Troy
Battle against Achaia's mailèd might ;
So strong in all endeavour, high in heart,
As Aphroditè, when to Ares' help
She came, and dared encounter of my spear !
So had we long since spoil'd the stately towers

Of Ilion, and for ever stay'd the war."

She spoke ; and Herè smiled thereat, well-pleased.

Meantime Poseidon to Apollo thus :

"Far from each other, Phœbus, still we stand ? 520

Not ours to falter, where another leads.

Our parts forborne in battle, 'twill be shame

Again to tread the brass-paved halls of Zeus.

Cold-blooded ! Hath thy heart no fire within ?

Bearest thou not in mind what we endured

From Ilion, we alone of all the Gods,

What time from Zeus to great Laomedon

We came, his yearlong thralls on stated hire,

And he so lorded it with high behests ?

'Twas mine this broad and beauteous wall aloft 530

To rear round Troy, that nought might be her harm ;

But, Phœbus, thine to shepherd flocks and herds

Of slow-paced oxen on the forest-flanks

Of many-folded Ida. Nathless, when

The bounteous Hours brought round the day of hire,

Violently then, and monstrously, the King

Wrong'd us of all, and sent us empty away,

Threatening to bear us, fetter'd hand and foot,

Slaves to the isles remote, with ears cropp'd off.

Together back we came, with chafing hearts, 540

Wroth for the hire and promise unfulfill'd.

And this the man whose children are thy care !

And for his sake art thou at war with us,

Who would the race were utterly destroy'd,
Men, women, children, in one evil death ! ”

But He who smites from far return'd reply :
“ Thou wouldst not deem me wise, Earth-shaking Power.
With thee to battle for the sake of men,
Whose nature is as that of tender leaves,
Their blood now warm, and summer in their veins, 550
What time they fatten on the fruits of earth,
But wither'd soon and lifeless. Rather we
Turn from the war, and leave them to their toils.”

He spoke and turn'd aside. His noble heart
Forbade him from encountering hand to hand
His own great Father's brother. But not such
His sister, fiercer far, great Artemis,
Queen of all beasts of prey ; loudly she chode
Apollo, and reproachful call'd and said :

“ Fleest thou, O Bender of the silver bow ? 560
Fleest thou, and to Poseidon all the fame
Surrenderest of a triumph unwithstood,
Won without fight ? Oh, what avails the bow
Vain-dangling from thy shoulder ? Ne'er again
Dare in my hearing at the feasts of Zeus
Thine olden boast, how once before the eyes
Of all the heavenly host thou daredst oppose
In single fight Poseidon, hand to hand ! ”

She ceased, nor great Apollo deign'd reply.

But all in wrath the adorèd Spouse of Zeus 570

Rebuked the arrowy Goddess and reviled :

“ Shameless and wanton! Wouldst thou set thyself
Against me? Task for thee to match my might,
Despite that terrible bow and feather'd shafts,
Wherewith Zeus hath endow'd thee, lioness,
To slay whome'er thou list of womankind !
Yet 'twere thy better part to hunt the stag
Or slay the beast of prey on mountain-side
Than match thee here with Powers superior far !
But, since thou lack'st the knowledge, we will fight, 580
And thou wilt know henceforth how I excel.”

She spoke, and with her left hand o'er the wrists
Gripp'd her arms tight, but with the right the bow
Tore from her shoulders, and therewith her ears
Belabour'd, smiling grim. Vainly she writhed,
Her wingèd arrows dropping all to earth,
But 'scaped at last in tears from 'neath her grasp,
And fled like dove that from a falcon's swoop
Hath flown beneath him to a cavern'd rock,
Her refuge, nor is doom'd to capture thence ; 590
Like her the Goddess fled, and left her bow.

Then Argeiphontes spoke, the guide in heaven :

“ O Leto, far from me be fight with thee ;
Ill is it to oppose whom Zeus hath loved.
Yea, be it, an thou list, thy boast in heaven
To have assail'd and conquer'd me in war.”

He spoke ; but Leto quick 'gan gather up

The wingèd arrows and the crookbent bow
Hither and thither strewn amid the dust,
Then turn'd, and follow'd in her daughter's track : 600
Who straightway sought the brass-paved hall of Zeus,
And gain'd Olympus, where, in tears, and all
Her robes ambrosial palpitating on her,
She rose to seat her on her Father's knee.
Her Father took her to himself, and smiled
Well pleased, and ask'd her question, speaking thus :
 " Mine own dear Child ! who of the Gods of heaven
Hath done this outrage on thee, all for nought,
As though my child were ta'en in dire offence ?"
 To whom crown'd Keladeinè made reply : 610
 " Thy wife, my Father : she hath given these stripes ;
Herè, the Goddess of the milkwhite arm,
Of whom is all the strife and war in heaven."
 Such was the commune of the Gods above.

Meantime behind the towers of sacred Troy
Phœbus Apollo enter'd, for he fear'd
Ev'n for the wall before the stately town,
Lest on that day, albeit in Fate's despite,
The Danaan host surmount it. Thereupon,
Likewise all others of the Immortal Powers 620
Moved to Olympus—sullen these, but those
Exultant—and beside their cloud-wrapp'd Lord
Took seat. But all this while Achilles raged,
Scourge to the Trojans and their hoovèd steeds ;

As when into broad heaven goeth up
Smoke from a burning town, by wrath divine
Enkindled, grief to all, to many death ;
Like grief, like death, Achilles wrought to Troy.

Whom Priam saw from off the heav'nsprung towers,
And that the Trojans fled in flutter'd rout 630
Before him, nor in them was any strength :
Therefore, descending with deep sigh to earth,
He thus forewarn'd the keepers of the gates,
Men of renown, who sate beside the wall :

“ Hold ye the gates wide open at full spread,
Nor loose your hold till all the host hath come
Thus panic-struck within ; for, verily,
Achilles is most nigh and drives their rout
Headlong—perchance to ruin. But, when all
Are closed, regathering breath, behind the walls, 640
Then mind ye quick to thrust again the valves
Back to the lintel close ; for much I fear,
Lest this Destroyer likewise enter in.”

He spoke ; they drew the bolts, and oped the gates,
Which, parting, made a very path of light
Before them. Thence Apollo sprang alone
To face the foe and fend the fall from Troy ;
For all their host was fleeing homeward now,
In utter rout, and parch'd with thirst and dust,
Leaving the battle-field ; whilst on their heels 650
Achilles pressing came, with brandish'd spear

And heart as by a frenzy fierce possess'd,
All hot to win the glory of their deaths.

Yea, the Achaïans then had ta'en proud Troy,
Had not Antenor's brave and blameless son,
Noble Agenor, been by Phœbus stirr'd:
On whom the God breathed strength, and likewise stood
Himself not far, against the beech-tree hid,
Thence to hold back the heavy hand of Death,
But wrapp'd in mist unseen. Agenor stood 660
Steadfast upon the dread Destroyer's path ;
And much he ponder'd, whilst he bode the charge,
And to his own brave heart, in trouble, said :
 " Unhappy that I am ! For if I flee
Before Achilles and along the route
Whereon so many panic-stricken crowd,
He will o'ertake and slay me coward there.
Or, if I leave these others to his sword
And turn mine own feet tow'rd the Ileian plain
Right from the bulwarks—so to gain perchance 670
The knolls of Ida, hide me in the brakes,
At eve to bathe and cool me in the stream,
And thence escape to Ilion—Tush, oh tush,
How fondly I debate ! For he, be sure,
Would mark me, as I mounted tow'rd the plain,
And with swift feet pursuing soon o'ertake.
No refuge then from Fate and violent Death ;
For more than is the strength of man his strength.

But if I meet him here before all eyes—
He too is vulnerable : one his life, 680
One only ; and men name him mortal man,
Albeit Kroneion crowns him with such fame.”
He ended, and with might collected stood,
And all his heart rush'd forward to the fight.

Like pard, that springs from out a deep thick wood
Against her hunter, dauntless, undismay'd,
Albeit she hears the baying of his hounds—
Yea, though he hath forestall'd her by a wound,
And though the javelin pierce her through, and hold,
She yields her not, but putteth forth her strength 690
Till she hath sprung upon him, or hath fall'n ;
Ev'n thus renown'd Antenor's blameless son,
Noble Agenor, had no will to flee
Ere of Achilles he could make assay.
Firm in his front he held his orb'd shield,
Aim'd his bright spear, and thus address'd his foe :
“ Aye, Aye—Achilles ! 'Twas thy certain hope
This day to sack the town of haughty Troy :
Fond ! For not yet the sorrows' tale is told
Endured in her behalf : she still hath sons 700
Many and brave, to guard her still, and save
Their homes, and wives, and children from her foes.
Valiant, and of a monstrous might in war,
Art thou ; yet shalt thou here attain thine end.”
He spoke, and from a heavy hand sent forth

His sharp-tipp'd spear, and struck beneath the knee
The greave, nor err'd ; the fresh-forged metal rang
Loudly around ; but back the spear recoil'd,
Nor pierced it, by the heavenly gift withstood.
Then in his turn on brave Agenor sprang 710
Pelides ; but Apollo suffer'd not
That glory to his arm, but snatch'd him up
And wrapp'd him in thick mist, and from the war
Bare him withdrawn in quiet to his home ;
But lured the other off the Trojan host
By a false guile : himself he shaped most like
Agenor, in whose stead he stood before
Achilles ; and Achilles made pursuit.

So, whilst Achilles press'd him o'er the plain,
Diverted tow'rd Scamander's eddy stream— 720
For still the God ran some short space afront,
And lured him by the hope of quick success—
Meantime the other Trojans gain'd their walls,
Most welcome, in a panic-stricken rout,
And throng'd the streets ; nor any durst abide
Beyond the wall, nor look behind, to know
Who had escaped, or who had died in war ;
But, like a torrent, in they pour'd, whome'er
A rapid foot or nimble limb had saved.

Iliad XXX

THUS, trembling, to their walls like fawns they fled,
Cool'd off their sweat, and drank, and heal'd their
thirst,

Resting against the battlements within ;
The while the Achaians nigher drew, with shields
Roofing their heads and shoulders. Fate, ill Fate,
Fetter'd brave Hector only, there to bide
In face of Ilion and the Scæan gates.

Then Phœbus turn'd and spake to Peleus' Son :

“Wherefore, Achilles, this thy vain pursuit,
For thou art mortal, I a heavenly God ? 10
Is't that thou yet not know'st me for a God,
That thus a quenchless fury drives thee on ?
Or that the routed Trojans' safe escape
Into Troy-wall, whilst thou art wandering here,
Is now no more thy trouble ? Yet beware :
How shalt thou slay me, who am deathless born ?”

Much-moved, Achilles spake in answer thus :
“Far-striker ! Most injurious Power of heaven !
Most foully hast thou wrong'd me, and beguiled

My foot from off the city : else, ere these 20
Had fled me, many a man had bit the dust.
These hast thou saved, and robb'd me of renown
Uncaring, in thy godhead quite secure
Of reckoning to be render'd afterward ;
Dear should it cost thee now, had I the power”

He said, and high in indignation turn'd
Tow'rd Ilion, springing swiftly, like some steed
That strains his strength in chariot-race, and skims
Smoothly at full-spread gallop o'er the plain ;
Thus lightly plied Achilles foot and limb. 30

And aged Priam's eyes beheld him first
Thus speeding, all ablaze, across the plain,
Most like the Star that entereth on the sky
In autumn, and amidst a thousand more
Blazes conspicuous in the midnight heaven ;
And men do name him great Orion's hound ;
Sign brightest, but most baleful, raining down
Fever on hapless mortals : ev'n so shone
His brazen arms around him, as he came.

Then moan'd the aged King, and smote his head 40
With hands on high uplifted, and his voice
Broken by groans, in supplication call'd
On his dear son ; who yet before the gates,
Ardent to meet Achilles, singly stood ;
To whom with outstretch'd hands the old man wail'd :

“Hector, my son, I pray thee, stand not thus
Single, apart from all, to meet this man ;
Else surely shalt thou meet thy death, o'erwhelm'd
Beneath him, who is mightier far than thou. 50
The hard of heart ! Oh, would that Heaven's regard
Were such toward him as is mine ; then soon
Vultures and dogs should tear him, limb from limb,
And this dread sorrow pass from off my soul !
Of many a noble son he left me lorn
By slaughter or by sale in far-off isles ;
And now, though all the men of Troy be closed
Behind their walls, two yet I miss—two more,
My sons I see not, whom Laothœ
Their mother, fairest of all women, bare, 60
Lycaon, and the godlike Polydore.
These, if they yet be living 'mid the foe,
Erelong we ransom home with brass and gold ;
For store have we within, and dowry rich
Gave her famed father, Altes, to his child.
And, though they now be dead, albeit we two—
Their mother and myself—who gave them life,
Shall long bewail them lost, yet briefer term
Of mourning shall the general nation keep,
Unless thou, Hector, perish likewise slain ; 70
Then of their mourning shall there be no end.
Come therefore, O my son, return within ;
So shalt thou save the men and women of Troy,
Nor raise to loftier height Pelides' fame,

Nor thine own self be reft of pleasant life.
And, though this move thee not, yet pity me,
Ill-fated, living yet to feel my fate,
Thy father, whom in saddest sort great Zeus
At last upon the threshold of old age
Shall smite ; but after every woe beheld— 80
My daughters dragg'd into captivity,
My sons all slaughter'd, and my home despoil'd,
And infant children dash'd against the stones
Amid the horrors of surrounding fires,
And brides by murderous enemies torn away ;
And last of all, perchance by sword or dart,
Some one shall take the spirit from my limbs ;
Then may the dogs I fed with mine own hand,
Under my board, the guardians of my gates,
Devour me at my threshold rent piecemeal, 90
Lap up my blood, and bask before my doors !
Such death—to lie thus cleft and gash'd with steel—
Well fits the warrior falling in his prime ;
For, hap what may, dead youth may ne'er be shamed.
But when an old man falls, and dogs may wreak
On hoary head and hoary chin, and all
The reverend limbs of age, dishonour foul,
Nought is more piteous in this piteous world.”
Thus pray'd the aged King, and off his head
Raised the grey locks, betwixt his fingers twined 100
In that his supplication ; nor could move
The heart of Hector. Then, from the other side,

His mother, all in tears, began lament ;
With one hand dropping low her bosom's veil,
And showing with the left the mother's breast,
Weeping she utter'd wingèd words, and cried :

“ Look on this, Hector ! Son, have reverence,
And pity thine own mother ! If that e'er
I gave this breast to still thine infant pains,
Now, now remember this, and hear my cry : 110
Retire, and from within repel thy foe,
Nor give this single challenge ! Reckless, cruel !
For, should he, conquering, slay thee, nor shall I
Who bore thee, best-loved offspring of my loins,
Nor thy rich-dowried spouse, lament thee, laid
On couch composed ; but hounds shall rend thy flesh,
Far, far from us, amid the enemy's fleet ! ”

Thus they, with tears, cried both to their dear son
Beseeching, but they turn'd not Hector's heart.
Firm to the dread Destroyer sole he stood ; 120
As when a snake upon the mountains, fed
With poisonous herbs, awaits a man, and stands
Fold above fold, with glaring eyes, and coil'd
About its lair, by fiery spirit possess'd ;
So, with like spirit unquailing, Hector stood,
And propp'd his buckler on a buttress near,
And to his own brave heart, much-troubled, spake :

“ Ah me, if now behind the battlements
I move secure, then straight Polydamas
Gives bitter greeting, that he bade me guide, 130

Under the shadow of this ruinous night,
Or e'er divine Achilles was bestirr'd,
The Trojans to their city ; nor to him
I yielded : better then to yield had been !
Now, since my madness hath destroy'd the city,
I shun for very shame to face the sons
And long-robed daughters of the homes of Troy,
Lest some poor craven at my heels dare cry,
' *Hector hath whelm'd the people in his pride.*'
Such cry might rise ; and then 'twere better far 140
To have withstood and conquer'd Peleus' Son,
Or died a glorious death beneath the walls.
Perchance, if now I laid aside my shield
And doff'd my helm, and left my spear reclined
Against this wall, and thither went alone
To greet my taintless foe, and pledged my faith
To render up to Atreus' royal Sons
Helen, and with her whatsoe'er of spoil
The barks of Alexander bare to Troy
(For this was the beginning of the strife) ;— 150
And, this beside, to halve amongst the foe
All wealth, whate'er this city holds conceal'd ;
And, having vow'd this vow, could I return
And from the Trojan elders draw an oath
Nought to secrete, but mete in portions fair
All treasure in these glorious walls immured ;—
Then haply— Tush, my heart, what fond debate !
Not thus may I approach him : neither grace

Nor mercy would he show, but slay me there
As helpless as a girl, without mine arms. 160
No gentle tryst can our encounter be,
No commune of a maiden with her swain
Under an oak or off a pleasant rock !
Remains alone to meet him, face to face,
And put it to the test, to whom the Lord
Of all Olympus wills the nobler name."

Such thought he ponder'd where he stood ; the while
Achilles nearer drew, nor less of might
Appear'd than Enyalios, when he shakes
Crest terrible in battle ; dread that ash 170
Of Pelion, as he brandish'd it on high
O'er his huge shoulder, and about him flash'd
His brazen armour, dazzling as the blaze
Of flaming fire, or like the uprisen sun.

But when he saw him such, a tremor seized
On Hector, nor his heart remain'd to bide
The onset, and in sudden fear he sped
Fleeing, yet left the gates behind his back.
On whom, well-weening of a peerless speed,
Sprang then the other : as, on upland moor, 180
Some falcon, nimblest of all feather'd fowls,
Darts down all effortless upon a dove ;
The dove beneath her, cowering, slants aside ;
Then strong the falcon o'er her quarry swoops
Shrill, and instinct with fiery will to slay ;

Thus flew Achilles straight on Hector bent ;
But he still fled along the wall of Troy
Trembling, and swift in panic plied his limbs.

Hard by the wall, along the road they sped
Still onward, and beyond the watch-tower pass'd 190
And wind-swept fig-tree, to the limpid springs
The fountains of Scamander's whirling waves.
The one with boiling waters leaps to light
And smoke curls off it as from flaming fire ;
The other ev'n in summer flows forth cold
As chilly snow, or hail, or crystal ice.
Nigh these in stone are wrought two fair broad tanks,
Wherein the daughters and the dames of Troy
Were wont to wash rich raiment, in the peace 200
That was, or e'er Achaia's sons had come.
Along this road the twain now ran, the one
Fleeing, the other bending in pursuit.
And brave was he who fled, but mightier far
Who follow'd swift ; nor race was theirs to win
Some prize of hide or sacrificial bull
(Such prizes as on foot-race are bestow'd) ;
Nay—but they ran for noble Hector's life.
Yet, ev'n as racing steeds about a goal
Wheel swift, for whom some precious stake is laid 210
(A slave or tripod) at a chieftain's games,
Ev'n thus around the walls of Priam wheel'd
Those two as with a whirlwind ; while the Gods

Hung on the sight, and Zeus, the sire supreme
Of mortal and immortal, thus began :

“Shame on me, who behold a man so dear
Thus hunted round Troy-wall : my heart pleads loud
For Hector, who hath oft, off Ida's peaks,
Or from his city's topmost pinnacle,
Made me burnt-offerings of the fat of bulls ; 220
Whom now with swiftest foot his heaven-sprung foe
Hath thrice round Priam's palaces pursued.
Ponder this therefore, heavenly Powers, and say :
Or shall we pluck him from the death, or whelm
Beneath Pelides one thus brave and true ?”

But azure-eyed Athene gave reply :
“Are these thy words, our Father, cloud-enwrapp'd,
Lord of the thunder ? And wouldst thou release
A mortal long predestined to his doom ?
Yea, if it be thy will ; thy will is law ; 230
But be assured, no God will praise thy deed.”

Then He who rules the clouds renew'd reply :
“Cheer thee, Tritogeneia, mine own child ;
I spake not the true meaning of my heart,
And fain would show thee favour. Do thy will,
Whate'er thy bent, nor longer now delay.”

He spoke, and quicken'd in Athene's heart
The spirit, erst flaming high, to higher flame ;
Down darting from Olympus' heights she sprang.

Meantime fleetfoot Achilles harder bore

240

On Hector, closing on him, as a hound
Hunts o'er the upland, thorough glade and dell,
Some fawn that he hath started from her couch :
Under a brake, perchance, she cowers awhile
Protected ; but he courseth still about
Unresting on her track till she be found ;
Thus Hector might not 'scape his fleetfoot foe.
But whensoever he sought again to rush
Back to the front of those Dardanian gates,
Under the shelter of the steadfast towers— 250
If haply from the parapets above
The Trojans might defend him with their darts—
So oft his foe, outrunning, cut him off
And drave him outward to the plain, yet still
Safe in the inner circle ran himself.
Ev'n as in dreams we follow one that flees
Before us ; nor, who flees, can ever flee ;
Nor we, who follow, ever overtake ;
Thus, neither could Achilles reach his foe,
Nor Hector flee. Yet how had Hector 'vail'd 260
Ev'n to prolong this while his doom of death,
Had not Apollo, once more coming forth
Beside him, for the last time, kindled high
His spirit, and fresh vigour through his limbs ?
Yet still divine Achilles beckon'd back
The Achaians, and with nod forbade them shower
On Hector all their bitter hail of darts ;
Lest haply some one smite him, and forestall

The fame, and *he* be second at the death.

Four times they circling now had reach'd the
springs ; 270

When the great Father stretch'd his golden scales,
And therein cast two fates, on this side death
To Hector's foe, on that to Hector's self ;
And holding poised the balance : down, down sank
The doom of Hector ; far it sank and deep
To Hades, and Apollo left him lone.

Then azure-eyed Athene came, and stood
By Peleus' Son, and spake these wingèd words :
“ O thou, the star of men, and loved of Zeus !
Soon shall we two achieve a noble name, 280
Here in the face of all Achaia's host,
On Hector, sateless though he be of war ;
For whom no manner of refuge now remains ;
Not though Apollo grovel on the floor
Beseeching at the feet of Father Zeus.
Stand therefore thou, and breathe thee ; I depart,
And tempt him to assail thee, might to might.”

She spoke ; he heard her bidding, well-content,
And rested, leaning on his brass-spiked spear.
She left him, and approach'd to Hector's side ; 290
Like to Deiphobus in form and voice
She made her, and address'd these wingèd words :
“ My brother, hunted thus around Troy-wall,

Truly Achilles presseth hard upon thee :
But, lo! I come, together will we stand,
Together bide the onset, and repel."

To her the hero of the glancing helm :
" Ever of all my brothers, who were born
Children of Priam and of Hecuba,
Of old thou wast the dearest unto me ; 300
But now, Deiphobus, ten thousand fold
My heart doth bid me honour thee, who thus,
Beholding this my plight, for my sole sake,
Hast dared to issue single from the wall,
Where others in their shelter bide secure."

Whom still the Goddess answer'd of her guile :
" My brother, thou hast said it. At my knees
Our father and dear mother knelt, in tears,
Beseeching, and my comrades came around,
Praying me to remain ; such trembling fear 310
Hath fall'n on all ; nor think but that my heart
Was pierced with bitterest sorrow through and through.
Yet have I come ; and let us charge right on
Together ; nor be sparing of our spears
Ere we have put the issue to the touch ;
Whether Achilles shall destroy us twain
And bear our blood-stain'd trophies to the fleet,
Or whether he perish slain before thy spear."

Guileful the Goddess spake, and drew him on.

And each had near'd the other on the field, 320

When bright-helm'd Hector first address'd his foe :

“No more, O Son of Peleus, as of late

When thrice round Priam's palaces I coursed

Nor dared to wait thy coming, fear I now.

Rather my heart now prompts me to withstand thee,

To slay or to be slain, as Fate may will.

Yet let there be one covenant betwixt us,

Whereto the Gods be called in testimony,

The guardians and high witnesses of pact.

If, on my part, Zeus grants me to survive 330

And take thy life, I wreak no outrage foul

Upon thee, but yield back thy corse, unshamed,

Save by the stripping of thy glorious arms ;

This will I do, Achilles, thus do thou.”

Frowning, Achilles fiercely gave reply :

“Speak not of pact to me, thou hound accursed !

As men to lions, or as wolves to lambs,

So I to thee ; and as 'twixt these and those

Peace can be never, but unending hate,

So thou and I can never be as friends. 340

No victim's blood shall flow betwixt us shed

Ere one or other, falling, pours it forth

In stream to glut the drought of Ares' maw.

Mind thee of all thy valour, now, in sooth

Need'st thou to show thee matchless in thy fence.

For thee is no escape ; lo, on my spear

Pallas Athene casts thee to thy doom !

This, this thy bloody reckoning for the woes

Of all whom thou hast slain beloved by me !”

Speaking, he whirl'd on high, and hurl'd his spear ; 350
Bright Hector mark'd the flight, and shunn'd the shaft
Down crouching ; o'er his head it flew and pierced
The earth beyond, but Pallas pluck'd it up
And moved to bear it to Achilles back,
Unseen of princely Hector ; he in turn
Prepared, and thus address'd his noble foe :

“ Erring thy hand, nor e'er that prescience came
From Zeus, thou godlike warrior, of my doom.
Thence didst thou vaunt it, glib of tongue and false,
And coin'dst thy lie, that thus perchance, appall'd, 360
I might forget me of my wonted might.
But now no more I flee ; nor in my back
Thy spear will fall ; if such be heaven's high will,
Behold me, face to face, and in my breast
Drive straight thy lance. Nay ! shun, if shun thou mayst,
Mine in thy turn ; yet haply may it go
Home with thee in thy flesh its length deep-driven !
Then shall the war bear lightlier unto Troy,
When thou, her worst destruction, hast been slain.”

Speaking, he whirl'd on high, and hurl'd his spear ; 370
Nor err'd, but on the midmost boss it struck
The shield, yet far leap'd off it in rebound.
And Hector groan'd in wrath, that that swift dart
Had thus escaped his hand, and all in vain ;
And stood, bewilder'd, lacking other spear.
Loud to his brother of the sun-white targe

He shouted with shrill call for second shaft
Vainly—for no Deiphobus was nigh.
Then Hector knew his hour, and cried and said :
 “ Clear, clear the Gods now call me to my death. 380
To mine own heart I said, Deiphobus
Stands by me, but behold within the walls
He bides, and Pallas hath beguiled mine eyes.
Now death, fell death is on me, close at hand :
Nor hope of refuge left ; for though they oft
Erewhiles befriending saved me, yet this doom
Was aye the issue dearer from old time
Ev’n to Zeus’ self, and Zeus’ far-smiting Son.
I fall ; yet something, ere I fall, some deed
Of noble note and prowess may be done, 390
The tale of generations and their song.”

Speaking, he drew the sharp bright brand, that hung
Its huge and massy length below his hip,
And, all his might collected, onward sprang.
As some high-soaring eagle cleaves the clouds,
Swooping to earth on lamb or quivering hare,
With like swoop Hector came, and falchion drawn.
Whom straight Achilles met, his heart surcharged
With ruthless rage ; athwart his breast he drew
The shining shelter of the wondrous shield, 400
And o’er his head the morion nodded bright
Four-crested, and the golden tresses danced
Thick-planted in the cone by hands divine.
Bright as, most beauteous of the stars of heaven,

The star of Hesper through the twilight glides,
So bright the ray shot off the fiery spear
Achilles brandish'd in a dread right hand,
To wreak on noble Hector deadliest hurt,
And pondering where his form might take the wound.
That splendid panoply of brazen mail, 410
The spoil and trophy of Patroclus slain,
Screen'd Hector head to foot, yet left the skin
There open, where the joints were clasp'd, betwixt
Gorget and hauberk, at the throat, where death
Comes quickest : deep in there Achilles drove
His lance with utmost force of heart and hand ;
Sheer through the tender neck the point came forth ;
Yet sunder'd not the passage of the voice ;
He still held power of speech ; but down i' the dust
He dropp'd, and loud Achilles vaunted o'er him : 420

“ Hector, when thou hadst hewn Patroclus down,
Thou saidst to thine own heart that thou wast safe,
And countedst me, as absent, nothing worth.
Fool ! For, though he were dead, a mightier far
Was yet aboard the galley left unslain
The avenger of his blood, ev'n I, who now
Have slack'd thy limbs. Thou therefore shalt be toss'd
To vultures and to dogs the carrion prey,
But he be laid with honour in his grave.”

Whom Hector then with failing breath besought : 430
“ Lo, suppliant at thy knees, by thine own life,
By thine own father and thy mother's love,

I pray thee, I implore thee, suffer not
Dogs to devour me mid my enemy's fleet !
Take thou as much as may suffice thy heart
Of brass or gold, all ransom shall my sire
Yield thee ungrudged ; but render to my home
My corse, that there the Trojans and their wives
May grant the dead his dues of funeral-flame."

To him Achilles answer'd, frowning fierce : 440
" Clasp not my knees, thou dog, nor speak of prayer !
Rather I would the fury at my heart
Hounded me on to hack thy limbs piecemeal,
Yea, plunge mine own teeth greedy in thy flesh,
For the ill thou hast wrought to me ! The man is not,
To drive devouring dogs from off thy head :
Nor though they brought and set before my grasp
Ten—twenty-fold thy proffer to redeem thee ;
Not though the royal son of Dardanus
Would ransom thee by thine own weight in gold ; 450
Not then should thy loved mother win her wish
To lay thee and lament thee on thy bed ;
No—but the dogs shall tear thy flesh amongst them."

Then, at the point of death, Hector replied :
" Yea, knowing thee, this also I foreknew,
I might not turn thee ; iron is thy heart.
Yet take thou heed, lest, with the will of Heaven,
My spirit then avenge me, on the day
When Paris and Apollo lay thee low,
Maugr' all thy might, here in the Scæan gates." 460

And, while he spoke, death wrapp'd him round, and forth,
Forth from his limbs the Spirit fled away,
Mourning the bloom and vigour that it left,
The beauty of manhood, and its own sad fate ;
Achilles yet address'd him, lying dead :

“ Die thou ! The Gods now slay me when they list ! ”
He spoke, and pluck'd his weapon from the wound,
And planting this apart, 'gan strip the arms
From off the corse, blood-stain'd ; the while around
Flock'd others of Achaia's sons, and gazed 470
Wondering upon the noble stately dead ;
Nor woundless would they leave him, ev'n in death :
And men, beholding, to each other cried :

“ Softer, in sooth, more yielding to our spears,
Than when he burnt the ships, this hero now ! ”
Thus crying, who were nigh him, stabb'd the dead.

The arms despoil'd, fleetfoot Achilles rose
Erect above the Achaians, and he spake :

“ Comrades and chieftains, captains of the host !
Seeing that the Gods have granted us to slay 480
The man who, more than all together join'd,
Was strong to do us hurt, now let us forth
In arms about the city, so to seek
Knowledge of what the Trojans now resolve ;
Whether upon his fall they fleeing leave
Their citadel unguarded, or have heart
Sufficient to abide, though he be gone.

But shame upon me, shame to argue thus,
While still Patroclus lies amongst the ships
Unhonour'd, unbewail'd, unsepulchred ! 490
So long as I converse with living men,
So long as these my limbs have spring beneath me,
Never may I forget him : yea, the dead
Are oft forgot in death's abode ; but I
Both here and yonder shall remember him.
Come therefore, ye, the flower of Argos' host ;
Singing our Pæan, to the fleet return
And carry this his body to our bark.
Praise, praise to us, and glory, who have slain
Great Hector, very God adored of Troy !" 500

He spoke, and on the noble dead 'gan wreak
Outrage most foul ; through either foot he bored
The tendons from the ankle to the heel,
Therein thrust thongs of hide, and strung them up
Fast to the chariot's rim, but let the head
Trail ; then upsprang into the chariot's seat,
And, rearing high the armour of the slain,
Lash'd on his steeds ; and, nothing loth, they flew.
A cloud then gather'd round the trailing corse,
The dark locks spread dishevell'd on the ground, 510
And all that head lay draggled in the dust,
So comely erst: for to his enemies now
Zeus had deliver'd him in his own dear land.

Thus lay the head of Hector, trail'd in dust;

[II]

U

Whose mother then 'gan rend her hair and cast
Her glistening robes from off her, uttering shrieks
In anguish, as she there beheld her son ;
And piteously his father sobb'd and moan'd ;
And round him wept the people, and the cry
Of lamentation went throughout the town. 520
'Twas as though Ilion from her beetling brow
Were headlong hurl'd and smouldering in the flames.
Scarce could the father in his woe be stay'd
Struggling to issue single from the gates ;
Heedless he grovell'd in the mire, and call'd
Praying on any who might hear his cry,
And name by name to each appeal'd and said ;
 " Hold ye, my people ; let me go ; alone
I go, and leave the city, and in tears
Approach the Achaian fleet, and there beseech 530
This barbarous, impious, terrible-handed man ;
So haply he may pity mine old age ;
For, like as I am, is his father now,
Ev'n Peleus, who begat him, to become
The malison of Troy : but most, above
All others, hath he heap'd his woes on me.
Already, in the flower of early youth,
So many of my children had he slain ;
But not for all of these, though deep, so deep
My grief, as now for one, for whom my tears 540
Shall quickly drag me down to Hades' gloom.
O Hector ! Hector ! would that thou hadst died

Here in mine arms ! Some comfort might it be
If I and she, whose piteous fate it was
To bear thee, now might satisfy our souls
With tears and lamentation o'er thy corse."

He mourn'd, with whom the city mourn'd and wept,
And Hecuba began the women's wail ;

"Dead, dead, my child ! And I must yet live on
Forlorn, and wretched of this utter woe ! 550
Thou, who wast still my glory day and night
In royal Ilion, and through Troy the stay
Of all her sons and daughters : like a God
They honoured thee, and thou to them wast fame.
Thus, thus it was, when thou wast yet alive ;
Now Fate and Death possess thy fame and thee! "

Wailing, the mother spake, and ceased in tears.

Meantime his wife knew nought, for none had borne
The message, that her husband thus had stood
For single battle, and beyond the gates. 560
Far in a quiet chamber of her home
She sate above a web of smooth bright cloth,
Enweaving an embroidery of flowers ;
And to the fair-hair'd maidens in the hall
Had call'd to set a caldron on a fire,
That waters might stand heated for the bath
Of Hector, when he came from battle home.
Blind, blind ! not knowing, by Athene's wrath
He from that bath dissever'd evermore

Lay stretch'd beneath Achilles' mighty hand. 570

Then her ear caught the sound of shriek and wail
Borne from the watch-tower ; and her limbs reel'd faint
Beneath her ; from her hand the shuttle dropp'd ;
And thus to those fair maids again she call'd :

“ Two from amongst you rise, and follow me,
Forth would I go to witness what hath pass'd.
I heard my husband's mother cry aloud ;
And mine own heart throbs palpitating in me,
And my limbs stiffen : evil, I forbode,
Is near the house of Priam. Woe the word, 580
And may it pass from off my tingling ear !
But much I dread, Achilles now hath driv'n
Brave Hector from the city all aloof,
And hunts him tow'rd the plain ; and now perchance
Stays him for ever from that prowess high,
That evil daring, that possess'd him quite,
Who bore not to abide with other men,
But still was foremost, yielding unto none !”

She spoke and, frenzied as a Mænad, flew
Forth from the palace with a bursting heart. 590
With her the maidens went ; and when they gain'd
The turret, and the throng of townsmen there,
One moment, 'wilder'd, on the wall she stood ;
The next, she knew him trailing in the dust,
And the swift horses dragging him to the fleet,
Remorseless, and before the city's face.
Then night in thickest darkness wrapp'd her eyes ;

Backward with short and gasping breath she fell,
And all the glittering head-dress from her hair—
The fillet, and the band, and braided net, 600
And that bright veil which golden Aphroditè
Gave to her on the day when Hector came
With thousand gifts, and led her from her home—
Fell with her falling, shower'd abroad to earth.
Round her the wretched parents and the wives
Of all her husband's brethren crowding stood
And bare her up, in swoon like unto death.
But when she breathed again, and sense and thought
Regathering came, with gasps and heaving sobs,
Amongst the Trojan women thus she cried : 610
 "O Hector, Husband! Hapless that I am!
To one like fate we two in distant lands
Were born; thou here in Troy and Priam's halls;
I under Placos' woody mount, in Thebes,
Far in the palace of Eëtion,
Who nursed and rear'd me through my infant years—
Ill-fated father of ill-fated child,
Whom would to Heav'n he never had begot!
Now thou below the lowest depths of earth
Art travelling on thy way to Hades' realm; 620
But me to uttermost distress thou leav'st
A widow in thy house. And lo thy son
Still infant, babe in arms, whom thou and I
Brought forth! Nor thou to him, for thou art dead,
Canst ever be delight, nor he to thee.

Yea—though he 'scape the perils of the war,
Yet what but toil and care for him remain,
Whom others still will rob of his estate?
The orphan hath no friends ; in fear he lives
And trembling, and his cheeks are wet with tears. 630
The child creeps up, and craving alms of men
Who were his father's comrades in old time,
Pulls at a cloak or flowing tunic's skirt ;
Whereat they pity, and perchance hand down
A slender cup, and suffer him to wet
His lips, but barely moisten the parch'd throat.
Or one, of either parent doubly bless'd
Thrusts him aside with blow and bitter gibe,
' *Begone ; with us thy father feasts not now.*'
Whence, weeping, to the widow runs her child. 640
And this to him, Astyanax, who erst
Was wont upon his father's knee to pick
Of marrow only and the daintiest meats ;
Or, when, aweary of his childish sport,
He rested to his slumber, laid him down
In a rich chamber, on a happy bed,
In gentle arms, and with sweet cates content.
But now, his father gone, all evil hap
Shall follow him, albeit by Troy surnamed
Prince of the city ; for by thee alone, 650
O Hector, stood these battlements and towers !
Yet now, amid the enemy's fleet, and far
From father and from mother, writhing worms

Shall of thy flesh eat all the dogs shall spare,
There where thou liest uncover'd to the winds ;
Whose raiment, rich and delicate, and spun
By hands of women, in thy home remains.
That will I burn upon a blazing pyre ;
Not that it can avail thee, when thyself
Art lacking, but that honour may be done
To thee by all thy country o'er the tomb !"
She wail'd, and all the women echo'd wail.

660

Iliad XXXIII

THUS Troy throughout her city wept and wail'd.
Meanwhile, returning to their camp and fleet,
The Achaians scatter'd, each to his own bark ;
Only the Myrmidons their chief forbade
To scatter, and bespake their gallant host :

“ O famed for swiftest steeds, my countrymen,
My comrades proved and loved ! Unyoke not yet
Our horses ; but with chariot-pomp and steeds
Move we around Patroclus, making wail
And dirge ; for this is what the dead desire. 10
But when our souls are satisfied of wail,
Loose then the steeds, and here we take repast.”

He spoke ; and with one voice they mourn'd, whose dirge
Achilles led. Lamenting still, they drave
Thrice round the corse their steeds ; for in their hearts
Thetis still fed the yearning unappeased.
The sands were wet, their arms were wet, with tears,
So brave, so dread, a warrior mourn'd they there ;
Midmost, Pelides laid his slaughterous hands
Across his comrade's breast, and led the dirge : 20
“ Ev'n in the abode of death, Patroclus, hail !

I hail thee ; and behold my vow fulfill'd—
Hector dragg'd hither and the prey of dogs ;
And twelve of Troy's fair sons shall next be slain,
And flung for this my vengeance on thy pyre !"

He spoke, and on his noble foe 'gan wreak
Outrage most foul, and stretch'd him stark and prone
Beside Patroclus' bier in dust and mire.
Then the whole host disarm'd them of their arms
And glittering mail, and loosed their whinnying steeds :
And by the galley of Æacides 31
Thousands on thousands sate them down, the while
He dealt them dainty meats for funeral-feast ;
Many a stalwart ox beneath the knife
Slaughter'd, and many a sheep and bleating kid,
Groan'd then their last ; and boars, with ivory tusks
And chines of glistening fat, were outstretch'd whole
Spitted athwart Hephæstus' flaming fires,
And blood ran forth like water round the corse.

Himself, fleetfoot Achilles, lord of all— 40
The chieftains of Achaia's host, with hard
Persuasion (for his grief was bitter still),
Led slow to royal Agamemnon's tent ;
And when to the pavilion of the king
They passing came, they straight with order call'd
Unto the clear-voiced heralds of the host
To set a massive caldron on a fire,
If haply they might move Pelides there

To cleanse his body clear of clot of blood ;
But strongly he denied them, and he sware 50
An oath upon it :

“ Nay, by Him who reigns
Mightiest above all Gods, by Zeus supreme,
Never may water on my head be pour'd,
Ere I have laid him on his pyre, and heap'd
His cairn, and shorn the forelock from his brow.
For hap what may, while I am of the world,
No second woe can touch me like to this.
Partake we now, albeit we loathe, this feast.
• But with the morrow's dawn speed thou, O King, 60
Thy people to bring wood, and all wherewith
'Tis seemly that the dead should furnish'd go
Beyond the misty distance of the west.
So early from our sight the sateless flames
Shall take him, and the nations turn to war.”

He spoke ; not loth, they heard him, and obey'd ;
And each one with all zest prepared and ate
The feast, nor any lack'd his equal mess ;
And when the craving pass'd of drink and meat,
They scatter'd each to slumber in his tent.

But all apart Achilles laid him down 70
On the full-sounding Ocean's echoing shore,
In open space, where billows dash'd up high ;
And sleep, in softest cloud about him shed,
Loosening the chain of sorrow round his heart,

Seized him, whose bright-greaved limbs were faint, foredone
With all the onslaught under windy Troy.

O'er whom the Spirit of Patroclus came,
In stature, and the garb around his limbs,
And voice, and eyes, the likeness of the slain ;
Above his head It stood, and spake, and said : 80

“ Sleep'st thou, Achilles, and art thus of me
Forgetful ? Whom in life thou ne'er didst fail,
Him now thou fail'st in death. But hear my prayer ;
Bury me now with speed, that I may pass
The gates of Hades, where the other shades,
The ghosts and phantoms of the feeble dead,
Repel me still, nor suffer me to join
Their shadowy throng beyond the Ocean-stream ;
So through Death's open hall I flit forlorn.

Give me thy hand, I pray thee, and farewell, 90
A last farewell ; for when ye have bestow'd
My pyre, I may not come from Hades more.
Never again in this the upper life
Shall we sequester'd from the throng of chiefs
Together to sweet counsel sit us down.

No, for the Fate, that was from birth my doom,
Hath yawn'd upon me, and engulf'd me quite.
And thou, though peer to Gods, art likewise doom'd
To fall beneath the walls of heaven-sprung Troy.
One last behest I lay upon thy love : 100

Place not my bones, Achilles, far from thine ;
But, as together in thy home we twain

Grew up—for me Menœtius brought, a child,
From Apœis to Phthia, by constraint
Of bloodshed, who had slain, in sad mischance
(A child unwitting, angry o'er my dice),
My playmate, son of king Amphidamas ;
Then Peleus gave me refuge in his halls,
And loved me well, and named me to thy side—
So let one urn now hold the bones of both,
The golden urn, thy heavenly mother's gift."

To whom fleetfoot Achilles made reply:

“What need, mine own belovèd, thus to come
And charge me, word by word? Fear not; whate’er
Thou biddest, to the utmost I fulfil.
But near—more near! Come—let us cast our arms
Around each other for a while once more,
And satisfy our souls with wail and woe.”

He spoke, with outstretch'd arms, but found him not ;
For with sharp cry the Shade below the earth 120
Vanish'd like smoke. Achilles leap'd upright,
Awe-stricken, and his hands together clapp'd,
And cried aloud, and spake these sorrowing words :

“Strange, strange ! Now know I, soul and spirit dwell
In Hades, but remain not flesh and blood.
All night the Spirit of Patroclus stood
Here, right above me, mourning and in tears,
And gave me, word by word, his last behest.
In all things it was marvellously like !”

He spoke, and quicken'd in their hearts, who heard, 130

Yearning of lamentation ; and the morn
Rose bright upon them wailing round the dead.

Then hasted Agamemnon to send forth
From out the camp on all sides men and mules
For timber ; at their head Meriones
Arosc, the follower of Idomeneus,
The noble follower of a gentle lord.
With woven ropes and axes in their hands
To hew the woods they went, and the mules trudged
Before them ; up and down, and side and slant, 140
They clamber'd, till they gain'd the forest-flanks
Of many-fountain'd Ida ; there they hew'd
Huge oaks, and plied their axes, might and main ;
So from the glens all day the echo came
Of crashing trees. But in the eve they bound
(Feet planted well apart to brace the knot)
The trunks behind the mules, who plough'd their path
Down through the brushwood, eager of the flat.
The hewers, following, on their shoulders bare
Lopp'd boughs ; for thus Meriones, their chief, 150
The squire of mild Idomeneus, gave word.
And down they flung and stack'd them on the strand,
There where Achilles plann'd to rear on high
For his own self, and for the dead, one tomb.

These, having flung the fagots down, in stacks
Unnumber'd, halted there and sate them down.

But all the warlike host of Myrmidons
Achilles bade to gird them in their mail.
Upspringing to his call, they donn'd their arms ;
And fighting men and drivers, side by side, 160
Mounted their chariots ; in procession march'd
The horsemen ; but, behind, a cloud of foot,
Myriads, and in their midst they bare the pall.
And all the body on the bier was veil'd
With tresses, which the mourners from their locks
Had shorn and cast upon him ; at his head
Stately Achilles moved, and bare it up
In tears ; so blameless, so beloved, the chief
He help with burial to the bourne of death¹.

Him they laid down, arrived upon the spot 170
Appointed of Achilles, and, in pile
To please his inmost soul, 'gan heap the wood.
Meantime across their chieftain came the thought
Of yet one other honour to the dead.
Standing a little space from off the pyre,
His yellow locks, which, till that hour, unshorn
Were nurtured, to the stream Spercheius vow'd,
He there dissever'd, and, much-moved, with gaze
Far o'er the purpling ocean, pray'd and said :

¹ The entreaty made by Patroclus at the commencement of this Book is sufficient to explain the manner in which the rites of burial were supposed to precede, instead of following, the final entry into the state of death.

“ Not this, Spercheius, was my father's vow, 180
Then when he pray'd that to my own dear land
I might return, and there above the founts,
Where are thy fragrant altar and thy shrine,
Offer my hair with sacred hecatomb
Of fifty rams beside those waters slain ;
He vow'd ; but thou fulfillest not his thought.
So, since 'tis doom'd that I may ne'er return,
Suffer me that I render to my friend,
A glory to Patroclus, these my locks.”

Speaking, he closed the hair within the hand 190
Of the dear dead, and quicken'd in all hearts
Yearning of lamentation ; and the sun,
That rose upon them wailing, so had sunk,
Had not the chief approach'd the King, and said :

“ To thee I come, Atrides, for the host
Will hear thy voice. Ev'n to this dear lament
Some limit of satiety is set.
Disperse them therefore from the pyre, and bid
All others to their supper ; we alone,
The nearest and the dearest to the dead, 200
Abide, and labour o'er him to the end ;
And with us let the nobles likewise bide.”

Whose word the monarch heard, and straight dispersed
The people through their galleys ; only bode
His kith and kin, and heap'd the wood. Four-square,
A hundred feet on either side, they framed
The pyre, and on the summit laid the corse,

Sore-stricken to their hearts ; then many a sheep,
Many a horn'd and slow-paced ox they flay'd
And carved before the pyre ; and from them all 210
Noble Achilles peel'd the fat, wherewith
He swathed the corse from foot to head, but flung
The baskets of their bodies on the pile ;
Then brimm'd large ponderous jars with honey and oil,
And fix'd them tow'rd the litter half aslope ;
And slew four noble steeds, and heaved and hurl'd them
High on the wood and louder groan'd his grief.
Nine favourite dogs were fed beneath his board,
Of these he now slew two, and cast them on ;
And after these, those twelve fair sons of Troy, 220
Slaughter'd, he flung, and wrought the barbarous deed ;
Last, lit the pitiless flames to feed on all ;
And, groaning heavily, invoked the dead :

“ Ev'n in the abode of death, Patroclus, hail !
I hail thee ; and behold my vow fulfill'd :
Twelve sons of noble Trojans on thy pyre :
Nor there the Child of Priam ; him to flames
I tender not, but tender to the dogs.”

He spoke with idle threat ; for not to dogs
Might Hector be the garbage : night and day 230
O'er him watch'd Aphrodite, born of Zeus,
And drave the dogs from off him, and with oil
Ambrosial of pure roses laved his limbs,
Anointing, that, despite the outrage foul,
Nor harm nor taint might rest upon the dead.

And o'er him, from the heavens to the earth,
Phœbus Apollo drew a violet cloud,
Darkening the region of the earth and air
Above, below, the body, lest the sun
Parch the fair skin about his limbs and reins. 240

Nor yet the pyre was kindled to a flame.
Then of yet one more rite Achilles thought :
Standing a little space from off the pyre,
Long to the mighty Blasts of north and west
He utter'd prayer and costliest offering vow'd ;
Frequent he shed libation from a cup
Of gold, and oft entreated their approach,
To burn up with all speed the corse with fire,
And shake the smouldering faggots to a blaze.
Whose prayer swift Iris heard, and straight she hied 250
Her errand to the Winds. Within the halls
Of stormy Boreas gather'd, feasting sate
The Winds, when Iris straight before them stood,
There on the threshold-stone ; whom all sprang up
Beholding, and each beckon'd to his side ;
But she would not be seated, but began ;
 " I sit not ; for forthwith I needs must hie
Hence to the Æthiop land, to Ocean's shore,
Where hecatombs in offering to the Gods
Are slaughter'd, and of these will I partake. 260
But this my errand, that Achilles prays
Your swift approach, and costliest offering vows,

So that ye kindle to a blaze the pyre,
Whereon with full observance now is laid
Patroclus, mourn'd of all Achaia's sons."

She spoke and straightway vanish'd. But, with roar
Beyond all mortal utterance, rose the Winds,
And roll'd the clouds in mass before their march,
And, breathing storm, came down upon the sea.
The waves rose high under their sounding blasts. 270
But they, arrived upon the shore of Troy,
Fell on the pyre ; beneath their breath divine
Loud roar'd the flame ; and all night long they blew
Ceaseless, and to and fro they toss'd the fire ;
And all night long Achilles, drawing wine
Forth from a golden urn in ample cup,
Down-shower'd it, wetting all the earth around,
And crying on the Spirit of his friend.
Yea, as a father, weeping, burns the bones 280
Of some dear son, young-wedded (and his death
Hath anguish'd either parent to the core)
Ev'n thus Achilles, weeping, burn'd the bones
Of the dead chief, moving with head bent down
Along the pinewood pile, and sobbing still.
But when the harbinger of light on earth
Came forth, the Star of dawn, in whose bright wake
Morn robed in saffron raiment showers her beams
On Ocean—then in ashes dropp'd the pyre
And ceased the flames ; and o'er the Thracian deep,
That murmur'd foaming up beneath their wings, 290

The Winds swept back, returning to their hall:

Again Pelides moved short space apart

And stretch'd him down outwearied : o'er him sleep

Fell sweet and sudden ; but the host 'gan flock

Regathering round Atrides, and the hum

And murmur of their coming woke the chief.

Upright he starting sate, and thus began :

“ Lords, chieftains, captains of Achaia's host,

And thou, their sovran prince, of Atreus Son,

I pray you first throughout the pinewood pile 300

To quench with sparkling wine whate'er of flame:

Yet smouldering bides within it ; then with search

Distinguish we, and gather up the bones

Of him, our Chief deplored, Menœtius' Son.

Not undistinguishable lie the bones ;

For him upon the midmost pyre we laid

Alone ; but all that else was with him burn'd,

The captives, and the steeds, about the edge.

Then will we place within a golden urn

His ashes, swathed in cauls against the air, 310

To rest till I be likewise lost in death.

His tomb I call not on you now to raise

To its full height, but build some cairn of mark,

Thus”—signing with his finger as he spake—

“ And see that ye, my people, who are left

Hereafter my survivors in the fleet,

Rear this to breadth and height above us twain.”

The fleetfoot hero spake, and they obey'd ;

They quench'd the pinewood pyre with sparkling wine,
Where'er the fire yet smoulder'd; and the pile 320
Fell deep together, wither'd to an ash :
Then, weeping, gather'd in a golden urn
And doubly swathed against the outer air
The white-bleach'd bones of him, their most beloved.
This in a tent they placed, with linen veil ;
But of the tomb they drew the lines, and cast
Foundations wide around the pyre, whereon
They heap'd up earth, and when the cairn was heap'd
Departed back.

But, meantime, Peleus' Son
Stay'd all the people there, and bade them sit 330
In a wide circle, and from out his ships
Brought caldrons, tripods, and grey iron-ore,
Horses, strong-throated oxen, sturdy mules,
And well-girt maidens—prizes for the games.
Then for a chariot-race he first set forth
The guerdons : for the winner's meed, a maid,
Well-girt, and skill'd in every gentle craft,
With one huge-handled tripod, capable
Of measures two-and-twenty ; for the next,
A mare, six years of age, and big with foal 340
(A mule) and still unbroken ; for the third,
A caldron, fair to view, unstain'd by fire,
White from the maker's hand, and capable
Of four good measures ; for the fourth, of gold
Two talents ; for the fifth, a chalice large

With double cup, untarnish'd yet by fire ;—
Then rose erect, and spake before them all :

“Atrides, and Achaia's mailèd host !

These prizes stand before you in the ring,
Waiting the champions in a chariot-race. 350

Full well ye wot, that, held we now these games

In other's honour, I should bear the first

Of a most certain surety to my tent ;

Ye know of what surpassing excellence

My horses, for they come of heavenly birth ;

Which great Poseidon to my father gave,

Peleus, and Peleus hath bestow'd on me.

But I, and they alike, will rest this day ;

So dear the hero they have lost—their brave,

Their gentle groom, who with clear water oft 360

Would cleanse their manes, and with rich oil anoint :

Whom now they stand lamenting, and their manes

Have droop'd to earth ; with aching hearts they stand.

But let who else soe'er of Argos' host

Trusts in his horses and his joinèd car,

Haste to get forth his chariot to the race.”

He spoke ; the charioteers assembled soon.

And first Eumelus rose, the King of men,

Admetus' son, in driving unsurpass'd ;

Then Diomed, the gallant Tydeus' son, 370

And yoked those steeds of Troy whereof he spoil'd

Æneas, though Apollo saved their lord ;

Then Menelaus of the auburn locks ;

Who with his own Podargus yoked the mare,
Æthè, his brother's, which Anchisius' son,
Prince Echeolus, had of late bestow'd
On Agamemnon, lest he should be call'd
To war in Ilion and away from home ;—
For large the substance wherewithal great Zeus
In Sicyon's spacious vale had bless'd his house :— 380
This mare, all glowing to the race, he yoked.
Fourth rose Antilochus, the noble son
Of Nestor, Neleus' son, bravehearted chief ;
Whose steeds were bred in Pylos, and by whom
His father stood and gave a counsel sage,
Advising thus, skill'd father to skill'd son :
 " Antilochus, despite thy youth, the Gods
Zeus and Poseidon of their love have taught
All skilful lore in manage of the car ;
Wherefore I need not teach thee ; thine own self 390
Know'st well to round the corner of the goal.
Yet, forasmuch as of the enter'd steeds
Thine are the slowest, I forbode thee harm.
Howbeit, although their horses are more swift,
The drivers have not more of skill than thou ;
And therefore, son, collect within thy mind
Thy knowledge, lest the prize should slip thy hands.
By skill, far more than strength, man tells the oak ;
By skill the pilot on the purpling deep
Guides the swift wind-toss'd galley where he lists ; 400
So by skill mainly will a driver win.

In steeds and chariot putteth one his trust,
And wanders wide at random to and fro,
Whose horses stray, nor he constrains them back.
But he who knows his art, albeit he drive
Worse steeds, yet, eyeing still the goal, wheels close
The corner round ; nor from the start forgets
To feel his horses' mouths, but holds them well
Restrain'd, and waiting on the car in front. 410
The goal I clearly tell thee, lest thou err ;
A wither'd trunk, a fathom's height, of oak,
Or fir, some wood that rots not with the rain,
Stands up ; and on each hand two huge white stones
Are propp'd. The course is smooth on either side,
But there the way is straiten'd : years ago,
Maybe, it mark'd the tomb of some dead man,
Or else a racing-point in olden time,
Ev'n as Achilles makes it now our goal.
Graze this ; thy steeds and chariot drive quite near,
Bending thy body on the well-built car 420
Leftwards, and cheering on with goad and voice
The *off* horse, give him rein ; but hold the *near*
Close, that he graze the pillar, and it seem
The nave on thy good wheel must raze its edge :
Howbeit, beware thou strike not on the stone,
Lest so thou harm thy steeds and break thy car—
Joy to thine enemies, to thyself disgrace.
Be guarded, dear my son, take careful heed ;
For, if thou couldst but pass them at the post,

Not one amongst them could o'ertake thee then, 430
Not though he drive Adrastus' noble horse
Arion, sprung of race divine, nor though
The coursers of Laomedon be his,
Sprung of Troy's splendid breed, and nurtured here.'

Thus spake Neleian Nestor ; and, when all
Of import had been utter'd to his son,
Moved back and sate him down. Meriones,
The gallant follower of Idomeneus,
Fifth for the race, made ready glossy steeds.

They mounted on their chariots, and cast lots. 440
Achilles shook the helm, and forth the lot
Leap'd first of Nestor's son, Antilochus ;
The next the royal chief Eumelus gain'd ;
The next brave Menelaus, Atreus' son ;
By whom to stand obtain'd Meriones ;
The noblest, Tydeus' Son, was outmost placed.
Then side by side they ranged them to the start
To whom Achilles signified their goal,
Rising far out upon the level plain,
And thither sent his father's comrade old, 450
The godlike Phoenix, as his scout to stand,
Thence watch the race, and bear him true report.

Each rose with lash uplifted o'er his steeds,
Smote with his thong, and kindled with his voice.
Forth from the fleet they flew : beneath their chests

The dust stood rising like a cloud or storm ;
Their manes went backward streaming with the wind ;
One moment, skimming smooth the fruitful earth,
The next, in mid air bounding, whirl'd the wheels ;
The drivers show'd erect upon their cars ; 460
And each for yearning of the victory
Felt his heart throb within him ; each invoked
Loudly his steeds. So show'd they o'er the plain,
Clouded in dust ; but as they near'd the post
Where they should turn them tow'rd the sea again,
Then was their mettle sorest tried, their pace
Strain'd to the utmost ; fast then bore in front
The fleetfoot mares of Pheretiades ;
And next behind them the brave Trojan steeds
Of Diomed, not far, but pressing close ; 470
Each spring would lift them to the car in front ;
Eumelus on his shoulders felt their breath
Breathed hot ; they touch'd him with their heads ; and quick
Had pass'd him, or had made a doubtful race,
Had not Apollo, wroth with Tydeus' Son,
Dash'd sudden from his hand the glittering goad ;
Whose eyes grew big with tears for grief to see
The mares shoot far and farther still ahead,
Whilst his own steeds were maim'd in mid career,
Running without a goad. But not unmark'd 480
Pass'd it of Pallas, that Apollo thus
Had wrong'd Tydides. Quickly to his side
She sped, restored the goad, and breathed herself

High spirit on his horses ; thence in wrath
Hasted behind Adrastus' Son, and brake
His yoke in sunder ; off the course his mares
Stray'd and the pole was dash'd upon the earth ;
Whilst headlong from his seat beside the wheel,
With mouth and nostrils bleeding, elbows rent,
And the smooth forehead bruised above his brows, 490
Their lord was thrown ; whose voice was lost within him,
And eyes were fill'd with tears : whilst, whirling by,
Clear of the ruck Tydides flew in front ;
Such mettle on his steeds Athene breathed,
And gave him all the glory of that day.

Next after whom was following Atreus' Son,
When to his father's steeds Antilochus :
" Put yourselves forth, ye two : strain every nerve :
With those good horses of brave Tydeus' Son
I may not bid you vie ; Athene grants 500
To them such strength, and crowns him with such fame.
But pass Atrides ; nor disgrace your breed,
Vanquish'd by Æthè, vanquish'd by a mare.
Why lag ye thus ? I warn you what shall hap :
If of your slackness worse the prize we win,
No more shall ye at royal Nestor's hands
Have tendance, but he straight shall slay you both.
On therefore, on together ; whilst I plan
How best to pass him in the narrow way,
There where he scarce can shun me, in the strait." 510

He spoke. They, quivering to their driver's cry,
Answer'd the call a little space, till soon
Their lord saw near the narrow strait a cleft
Wherein the water had in winter stood,
Broken the course, and hollow'd all the ground.
Atrides now was there, and shunn'd a clash :
But, slanting from the roadway, Nestor's Son
Quicken'd his steeds, then slanted back, and bare
Full on him, who in fear cried out and said :
 " Recklessly art thou driving, Nestor's Son ! 520
The way is narrow here ; soon mightst thou pass
In broader space ; rein back, lest on my car
Thou clash, and with the encounter wreck us both."

He spoke ; Antilochus but drave the more,
Like one who heard not, goading on his steeds.

Far as a quoit-cast from the shoulder thrown
Of some fresh youth assaying of his strength,
So far together, neck to neck, they raced ;
Atrides' mares then yielded, and fell back :
Himself had ceased to urge them, lest perchance 530
The steeds should clash upon the straiten'd course,
O'erturn the wellbuilt cars, and cast their lords
Down in the dust, for victory all too keen ;
Yet, as he yielded place, in wrath he cried :
 " Speed ! To perdition speed, Antilochus !
No mortal man e'er did a fouler wrong.
Falsely Achaia deems thee brave and true :

Yet, save thou back'st it by an oath forsworn,
Thou shalt not by this practice bear the prize."

Then, to his horses turning, cried, and said : 540
"Be ye not stay'd, nor chafed overmuch.
Their feet and limbs shall fail them sooner far
Than yours ; for they are of a youth outworn."

He spoke, and, quivering to their driver's cry,
They answer'd, and still hasten'd on the more.

Meantime the people sate, and watch'd the steeds
Clouded in dust and flying o'er the plain :
Till first the Cretan Chief Idomeneus
Distinguish'd whose the horses : for he sate
High on a place of vantage and outside 550
The general circle ; whence he caught the voice
Cheering the foremost on, though still afar ;
And knew the leader, by conspicuous mark—
A chestnut all parts else, but on the brow
Like the full moon one bright white circle shone.
Erect above the others thus he spake :

"My friends, and captains of Achaia's host !
Do ye descry the steeds, or I alone ?
I see the foremost shifted, and in front
Another driver shows ; for his who led 560
First from the start, have fall'n in their career.
I saw them foremost round the goal, but now
No more descry them, though I roll my eyes
O'erlooking hence the whole wide field of Troy."

Either the reins have slidden from his hands,
Or he hath fail'd, when wheeling round the goal,
To hold his horses, and hath met mishap.
Fallen I deem him, and his car destroy'd,
His mares astray and with wild fear distraught.
But rise, and see with your own eyes ; myself 570
Distinguish clear ; the first is now the son
Of noble Tydeus, valiant Diomed,
By birth Ætolian, and in Argos King."

To whom swift Ajax, he of Oïleus,
Made answer, and with angry words assail'd :
" Why prate before the time, Idomeneus?
The steeds still gallop on the plain far off ;
Nor art thou so the youngest of the host,
That thine should be the keenest ken of all.
It is thy wont to prate ; yet scarce such talk 580
Beseems thy place where better chieftains sit.
I tell thee, as at first, the selfsame mares
Lead, and their lord Eumelus holds their reins."

To whom in wrath the Cretan thus rejoin'd :
" Ajax, to strife most prompt and evil words,
But else much lacking, ever rough in mood !
A tripod or a caldron stake thou down
In wager ; and be witness Atreus' Son,
The King, whose horses run the foremost now :
Losing and paying, thou wilt know me true." 590

He spoke ; swift Ajax, he of Oïleus,
Rose anger'd, to requite with bitter words ;

And soon the strife betwixt them had waxen hot,
Had not Achilles risen and spoken thus :

“ Ajax ! Idomeneus ! these evil words
Bandy no longer, all unmeet ; yourselves
Were anger'd with whoe'er should do the like.
Be seated still ; ye soon will see the steeds ;
Hasting to victory they will come, and bear
Their own good witness, whose be first, whose next.” 600

He spoke ; and now Tydides drew quite nigh,
Pressing still onward, plying ceaseless thong.
Lightly his coursers with uplifted limbs
Made their swift passage, and with dust the spokes
Sprinkled the driver ; on the horses' heels
The car, with gold and dark enamel thick,
Trod ever, nor behind indented left
In the fine sand the traces of the tires.
So swift they flew ; till in the arena's midst
He stay'd them ; and from off their chests and crests 610
The sweat 'gan gush in runnels to the ground.
Himself then bounding from the glittering car
Laid on the yoke his goad ; and Sthenelus
Was ready there, his follower, handing o'er
The prizes, maid and tripod, to his train,
And his own self unharnessing the steeds.

Next came—yet not in Menelaus' front
By speed, but by foul practice—Nestor's Son ;
Whom Menelaus, nathless, press'd most hard ;

Near as a horse before a wheel, who draws 620
His master at full stretch across a plain,
Brushing the tire behind, so near he runs,
With narrow space betwixt him and the wheel,
Whilst free and far he gallops ; ev'n so near
Show'd Menelaus to Antilochus,
Albeit at first a full quoit-cast behind ;
And fast was gaining, for his brother's mare
Æthè was waxing of her noble might ;
Yea, had the course some paces further stretch'd,
He had flown foremost, clean, beyond demur. 630

A spear-throw after these, Meriones,
The gallant follower of Idomeneus,
Came fourth ; for of the horses in that race
His were the slowest, and himself least skill'd
To drive a chariot on the course. But, last,
Driving some steps in front his horses loose,
And with his own hands dragging slow his car,
The King Eumelus. Peleus' fleetfoot Son
Had ruth beholding, and arose, and said :
" The best hath come the last ; the second meed 640
Be his, his due ; the first be Tydeus' Son's."
He spoke, and to his bidding all acclaim'd.
Thereafter had Eumelus ta'en the mare,
Had not Antilochus, brave Nestor's son,
Uprisen, and made just answer thus, and said :
" Achilles, wroth were I, if, as thou sayst,

So thou shouldst do. Me of my meed thou robb'st,
Considering this, that his swift steeds and car
Were sudden maim'd, but he is brave and good :
Yet, had he, as behoved him, pray'd the Gods, 650
He had not lagg'd the hindmost in this race.
And, if such ruth and favour thou wouldst show,
Much gold thou hast, much brass, within thy tent,
And flocks and herds ; damsels thou hast, and steeds ;
Of these, an so thou list, a larger meed
Bestow upon him to thine own high praise.
The mare I will not yield ; and who shall seek
To take her, let him meet me hand to hand."

He spoke, on whom the fleetfoot hero smiled,
Rejoicing in him, for he loved him much ; 660
And thus in answer wingèd words address'd :

" Bid me yet more, Antilochus, bestow,
And I fulfil thy bidding. I will give
The corslet that I stripp'd from off the breast
Of brave Asteropæus, ribb'd with brass
And edged with bright enamel ; great its price."

He spoke, and to Automedon gave word
To bring it from his tent, who brought it forth :
He gave it to Eumelus' hands ; with joy
Grateful, Eumelus took it.

Then uprose 670
Amongst them Menelaus, chafed at heart,
Exceeding wroth with Nestor's Son ; to whom
A herald gave the sceptre, ere he spake,

And bade the host keep silence. He began :

“Antilochus, discreet esteem'd till now !

Why hast thou done this? Who hast shamed my skill

And hurt my horses, thrusting to the front

Thine own, inferior far. To you I turn,

Chiefs, captains of Achaia ! 'Twixt us twain

Give judgment fair, abetting neither side, 680

Lest from our men-at-arms the cry should be,

How Atreus' Son hath wrong'd Antilochus

With falsehood, and hath ta'en the prize, the mare,

For that, albeit his steeds were much the worse,

Himself was mightier by his place and power.

Yet might I speak the judgment in my cause,

This ne'er were cast by Danaan in my teeth ;

For plain 'twill be and straight. Antilochus,

Stand forth, Zeusborn ! And take into thine hand
The selfsame limber thong wherewith thou drav'st, 690

And with thy palm upon thy horses' heads

Swear by the God whose billows clasp the earth,

Ennosigæus, that thou didst not check

My chariot or by malice or by guile.”

Antilochus made answer thus discreet :

“For my youth's sake this while forbear the wrong,

Most noble Menelaus ! Thou in years

Art elder, and in power excelling far.

Thou know'st the faults to which a youth is prone ;

Sudden his temper, and his forethought weak. 700

But be appeased ; I render back the mare

Which I have ta'en. Yea, aught from out my house
That thou couldst ask, I'd gladlier bring forthwith,
Than live, most noble chief, for all my days
Fall'n from thy heart, and sinning against the Gods."

Speaking, the son of noble Nestor led
The mare and gave her to his hands ; whose heart
Was melted ; as in ripen'd field, when earth
Is bristling with the bearded grain, the dew
Softeneth the ears ; ev'n so, O Atreus' Son, 710
The heart was soften'd in thee, and thou thus
Mad'st answer, and address'd him wingèd words :

" Now, whatsoever mine anger, of free will,
Antilochus, I yield it up to thee.
'Twas ne'er thy use in wantonness to err ;
This while thy youth o'ercame thy better sense.
Yet shun henceforth such practice on thy chiefs.
No other man alive had won me thus ;
But thou hast labour'd much, hast suffer'd much,
Thou, and thy brother, and thy father brave, 720
For this my cause ; and therefore to thy voice
I hearken, and will render up the mare,
Though mine she is by right ; that all who see
May know me of no proud, ungentle mood."

He spoke, and to the brave Noemon gave
The mare, to lead her to Antilochus ;
But took the glittering caldron for his meed.

Then fourth, as fourth he drave, Meriones

Took the two golden talents. The fifth prize
Remain'd, the chalice with the double cup ; 730
And this Achilles took and through the throng
Bare it to Nestor, at whose side he spake :

“ Be this, my Sire, an heirloom in thy house,
For memory of Patroclus and his grave ;
Since him alive thou ne'er again canst see
Amongst the people. This I give to thee,
Thy due, unwon, who mayst not enter now
The arena, nor to wrestle, nor to box,
Nor throw the javelin, nor in footrace run
Victorious ; for thy years oppress thee sore.” 740

He spoke, and gave it to his hands ; with joy
The Elder took it, and made answer thus :

“ Well, O my child, and truly hast thou said.
My limbs, belovèd, are not firm, my feet
Early give way, no longer may my hands
Spring nimbly from my shoulders to and fro.
Would I were young, and of such strength, as when
The Epeians buried in Buprasium
Their sovereign Amarynces, and his sons
Set forth their prizes at his funeral-feast. 750
No man show'd then my equal ; none of all
The Epeians, or the brave Ætolian clans,
Or mine own Pylians ; in the boxers' bout
I vanquish'd Clytomedes, Ænops' son ;
Ancœus in the wrestle, who was born
In Pleuron, and rose up against me there ;

Swift though he was of foot, Iphiclus fail'd
Against me ; and with javelin I outhrew
Phyleus and Polydorus. All I gain'd
Save one ; for in the chariot-race the sons 760
Of Actor, two upon the selfsame car
O'ercame me ; for that they were two, and one
Might ply the reins with undivided mind,
And one might urge the steeds with ceaseless lash,
And both begrudged to me the victory,
For largest was its prize, and last remain'd.
Such was I once ; but now let younger men
Meet and partake such feats ; to painful age
I yield me, who show'd first of heroes then.
But go, and do thou honour to the grave 770
Of thy lost friend. This gift I gladly take ;
Yea, and my heart rejoiceth, that thou still
Art mindful of me, and thou hast my love,
Ne'er failing of the honour, wherewithal
'Tis meet that I be honour'd in this host.
The Gods requite thee with thy heart's desire !"
He spoke, whose praise Pelides heard, well pleased,
Attentive, and thence turning through the throng
Made way, and for the boxers' bruising fight
Set forth the prizes. First a mule he brought, 780
Unbroken yet and stubborn to the yoke,
Six years of age, and tough and hard to toil,
And bound it in the mid arena fast.
This for the victor ; for the vanquish'd, next

He laid a chalice with a double cup ;
Then rose erect and spake before them all :

“ Atrides, and Achaia's mailèd host !

We summon forth to combat for these meeds
The twain, whoe'er they be, who boast themselves
Best skill'd to ply the cestus and endure. 790
Whom with endurance Phœbus most endows,
Here in the sight of all Achaia's host,
Be his to take this toil-enduring mule ;
The vanquish'd home may bear this double cup.”

He spoke ; and Epeus, son of Panopeus,
Straightway rose up, a man of might, and huge,
Skill'd in the boxer's art, and laid his hand
Upon the toil-enduring mule, and spake :

“ Let who would win the chalice draw him near.
The mule no man shall gain from me, or vaunt 800
A victory in this contest ; for herein
I boast me without peer. To be excell'd
In daily battle—is not that enow?
Yet none in every art may be supreme,
But each in one ; and what I say shall be :
Whoso ariseth, I will bruise his flesh
And crush his jaws together ; let his friends
Be near at hand and gather in a throng
To bear him off, subdued before my arm.”

He spoke ; awhile they sate in silence all, 810
Till rose a godlike man, Euryalus,
Son of Mecistus, grandson of the King

Talaion. He, when in his prime, at Thebes,
At funeral of the son of Œdipus
In battle slain, of old had vanquish'd all
The chiefs of Cadmus. Now alone he rose,
Prompted thereto by gallant Tydeus' Son
Who craved the victory to his arm, and gave
With hopeful words good heart, and girt his loins,
Doing him service, binding fast the gloves 820
Fashion'd from out the hide of grazing ox.
So, midmost of the ring, with loins begirt,
The two came forth : and face to face, erect
Stood with clench'd fists ; then each on other dash'd
And plied their mingling arms with all their force.
Dread was the clatter of their jaws ; and sweat
Stream'd down their limbs ; till godlike Epeus rush'd
Close in, and dealt upon the cheek a blow
Under his eyes bewilder'd ; long in fight
He stood not, for his limbs thereat gave way. 830
And, as from off a foaming coast a fish
Shows on the ocean ruffled by a breath
Of Boreas, leaping high, and then forthwith
Falls swallow'd in the blackening wave again ;
Such leap he leapt, hardsmitten ; whom his foe,
The noble Epeus, raised and set erect :
And soon his loyal followers stood around,
And led him through the crowd, with trailing feet
And nodding head, and placed him all distraught
Safe on a seat, then went and brought his meed. 840

Then other prizes Peleus' Son set forth
Before them for the toilsome wrestling-match ;
A tripod, huge, of brass, and proof to fire,
For him who won ; the Danaans, where they sate,
Priced it at oxen twelve. For him who fell,
A damsel, in their midst display'd, well-skill'd
In divers arts, and priced at oxen four.
Then straight he rose and spake before them all :

“ Let, who would venture for these meeds, arise.”

He spoke ; and Telamonian Ajax first 850
Rose up ; Odysseus next, the king of craft ;
And both anon, with loins begirt, came forth
Into the ring, and gripp'd with brawny hands
Each other by the elbows ; show'd their arms
Like interlacing rafters, fitted firm
By a famed builder in a lofty roof
To give the winds the go-by ; off them stream'd
Their sweat, and in the stern strain of strong hands
Creak'd their broad backs, whilst, purple with their blood,
Swoll'n on their ribs and shoulders rose the veins : 860
And either's heart was hot with rivalry
To win the brass-wrought tripod. Nor avail'd
Odysseus to lay Ajax flat to earth,
Nor Ajax 'vail'd, but firm Odysseus stood ;
Till, when the host 'gan weary of such play,
Ajax thus spake, the son of Telamon :

“ Most wise, most brave, Laertes' Zeus-sprung Son !
Suffer that I lift thee, or thou lift me,

And leave the issue to the care of Zeus."

He spoke, and lifted first from off the ground 870
Odysseus, who, not therefore of his craft
Unmindful, with his heel enwound behind
In the knee-bend, o'eturned him, and made slack
The limbs beneath him, that he backward fell
Flat, with Odysseus on his chest enclasp'd :
The crowd admiring gazed, and gave acclaim.
Much-suffering brave Odysseus in his turn
Then raised the other, yet from off the ground
Could lift but little space, nor hold at all ;
But his own knee gave way, that both fell down 880
Beside each other, in the dust besmirch'd.
Then up sprang both, and quick had closed again
For a third bout, had not Achilles risen
Himself and stay'd them and address'd them thus :
" Strive ye no more, of such discomfort fond ;
Either hath conquer'd ; equal guerdons take,
And part, that others may have place to win."
He spoke ; to whom they hearken'd, nothing loth,
Cleansed them of dust, and donn'd their coats of mail.

Next, other prizes Peleus' Son set forth 890
For speed of foot ; a cup of silver wrought,
Holding six measures, peerless through the world
For beauty ; in rich Sidon fashion'd first
By cunning city-craftsman ; thence aboard
Brought by Phœnicians o'er the misty sea,

Who stay'd their vessel in the Lesbian ports
And gave it to King Thoas : Jason's Son
Euneus gave it next as ransom-price
For young Lycaon, noble Priam's child,
Ev'n to Patroclus ; in whose honour now 900
Achilles for the fleetest made it prize.
A lusty bull he made the second meed ;
The third, a full half-talent of pure gold ;
Then rose erect, and spake before them all :
 " Let who would venture for these meeds arise."
He spoke. The fleetfoot son of Oïleus,
Ajax, first rose ; and sage Odysseus next ;
Then agèd Nestor's son, Antilochus,
Of all Achaia's youth the fleetest foot.
They ranged them side by side, and Peleus' Son 910
Mark'd them their goals. But from the start they made
Their utmost pace ; the son of Oïleus
Bare foremost, but on him Odysseus press'd ;
As near as to a wellgirt damsel's breast
The shuttle which she plies with nimble hand,
Drawing the yarn from off the reel, and holds
Near to her bosom ; ev'n so near still sped
Divine Odysseus, hard on Ajax' heel,
Treading his footsteps ere their dust had risen,
And breathing hot upon his nape, and ever 920
Lightly pursuing ; whom Achaia's host
Cheer'd, as he hasten'd, longing for the meed.
And both had near'd the finish of the course,

When in his own brave heart Odysseus call'd
With prayer on Pallas, Maiden azure-eyed :

“ Be helpful, mighty Goddess, to my foot.”

He spoke, whose prayer Athene heard, and made
Lighter his limbs and feet, and arms above ;

And they had wellnigh sprung upon the prize,

When Ajax slid and fell—(Athene's hand 930

So tripp'd him, where the offal had been flung

Of those loud-bellowing bulls, by Peleus' Son

Slaughter'd and thrown upon Patroclus' tomb):

He lay with mouth and nostril choked in mire ;

Whilst on Odysseus ran, and lifted high

The silver goblet. Noble Ajax rose

And took the ox ; one hand upon its horn

He stood, and spat from out his lips the mire,

And midmost of the Danaans spake and said :

“ The Goddess tripp'd me—she who, ever fond, 940

Cleaves to Odysseus—mother to her babe !”

He spoke ; at whom right courteously they laugh'd.

The last prize then Antilochus took up,

Smiling well-pleased, and spake before them all :

“ I speak but what ye all, my friends, know well.

The Gods delight to honour ancient men.

Ajax is elder scarce than mine own self ;

But he, divine Odysseus, who hath won,

Is of the earlier giants, older times :

A green old age is his ; and him to pass

950

Were task to any, save to Peleus' Son.”

He spoke ; and to Achilles gave the fame ;
Who, answering, thus address'd his wingèd words ;

“ Not to no purpose shall be this thy praise
So spoken ; but I add half talent more.”

He said, and gave it to his hands ; the youth
Received it blithe.

Then Peleus' Son set forth
The shadowing spear, the buckler, and the helm
Late by Patroclus from Sarpedon spoil'd ;
Then rose again and spake before them all : 960

“ For these we summon forth the best in arms
To don their harness and with spear in hand
Attempt each other in a single fight.
Whoso with outstretch'd spear shall draw the blood,
To him I give this silver-hilted sword,
For brave Asteropæus wrought in Thrace,
Won when I slew him on the yester day.
These other arms shall either take in shares,
And we will serve them banquet in our tent.”

He spoke. The giant son of Telamon, 970
Ajax, uprose, and valiant Diomed ;
Some short way off the crowd they donn'd their mail ;
Then in the midst, with hearts for battle fain,
Both, fiercely glaring, met. Achaia's host
Beheld, admiring. Each the other near'd ;
And thrice sprang on, and thrice were hand to hand ;
Till Ajax through the orbèd shield pierced sheer,
Yet wounded not ; the corslet stay'd the point ;

Whilst Tydeus' Son sought still his rival's throat
With sharp spear-point above the giant shield ; 980
Till, fearing for him, all Achaia's host
Bade both be stay'd from battle and receive
Their equal guerdons ; but on Tydeus' Son
Bestow'd the hero that great glittering brand
With sheath and baldric of a smooth-cut hide.

Then Peleus' Son set forth of iron ore
A mass unwelded, crude. Eëtion's strength
Of old would hurl it ; him Achilles slew,
And bare this off along with all his wealth
Aboard his galleys ; now he rose and spake : 990

“ Let who would venture for this meed arise.
Who wins it, though his fields be wide and rich,
For five full years it shall suffice his use ;
Nor shall he need for lack of iron ore
Take him to city-market, but shall have
To spare, or tills he soil or tends he flock.”

He spoke, and warlike Polypoetes rose ;
And with him strong Leontes, match for Gods ;
Then Epeus, and the Son of Telamon.
In turn they stood to throw ; first Epeus poised 1000
And hurl'd the iron ; but the host, who sate
Beholding, laugh'd derisive : next, the flower
Of Ares, young Leontes : third, the son
Of Telamon, huge Ajax, raised, and threw
Beyond their marks ; but, when at last the quoit

Was ta'en by warlike Polypœtes up,
Far as a herdsman throws his staff, which flies
Whirring amongst the herd, so far beyond
The allotted space he threw it. All acclaim'd ;
And his brave followers rose, and bare the prize 1010
Back to the hollow galleys of their chief.

Next, to the bowmen he set forth a prize
Of violet-colour'd iron, axes, ten
With double head, and ten with single head ;
Then raised upright a darkprow'd galley's mast
Far on the sands, and bound a fluttering dove
With a thin riband by the foot thereto,
And bade them take their aims ;

“ Whoe'er shall strike

Yon fluttering dove, let him uplift and bear
These doubleheaded axes to his tent ; 1020
But, who shall miss the bird, though ev'n he cleave
The string, yet, forasmuch as less of skill
He miss'd his aim, the single heads be his.”

He spoke ; the strength of kingborn Teucer rose,
With the brave follower of Idomeneus,
Meriones ; and in a brazen helm
They cast their lots, and Teucer gain'd the first.
Strongly he sent his arrow, yet had fail'd
To vow upon the altar of the God
A farfamed hecatomb of firstborn lambs ; 1030
Wherefore the bird he miss'd ; Apollo grudged

That honour ; yet beside the foot he struck
The string whereby the bird was bound ; the string
Was sunder'd by the bitter arrow through ;
The bird soar'd up tow'rd heaven, whilst down the string
Dangled to earth ; and loud acclaim'd the host.
Whereat Meriones incontinent
Seized from his hand the bow (he held his shaft
Prepared already, whilst the other aim'd) ;
And, vowing to the God who smites from far 1040
A farfamed hecatomb of firstborn lambs,
Look'd up and spied beneath the clouds aloft
The fluttering dove, and pierced her as she wheel'd
Under the wing ; right through her went the shaft ;
Yet, as she fell, once more upon the mast
She settled, and there hung, with neck awry
And wings asunder, till the spirit fled
Swift from her members, and she dropp'd to earth.
The crowd, admiring, gazed and gave acclaim.
But blithe Meriones uptook the ten 1050
With double heads, whilst Teucer bare his meed,
The single-headed hatchets, to his tent.

Then Peleus' Son brought forth a shadowing spear,
And one bright caldron, valued at an ox,
Untarnish'd yet by fire ; and who would throw
The javelin, rose to contest. First uprose
Broadruling Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
And next, the follower of Idomeneus,

Meriones ; but thus Achilles spake :

“ Atrides, well we know how far above 1060
All others thou dost stand ; nor more in rank
Than in the javelin-throw. Wherefore accept
This guerdon, and to brave Meriones
Let us, according to thy pleasure, give
The brazen spear : I speak mine own desire.”

He spoke ; not loth, Atrides, king of men,
Gave to Meriones the spear, but charged
Talthybius with his own bright glittering meed.

Iliad XXX

THE throng was loosen'd, and the nations went
Each to their separate ships, and turn'd their
thoughts

To joyance of repast or sweet repose ;
Only Achilles, still remembering, mourn'd
His dear companion. Sleep, all-conquering Sleep,
Subdued him not ; but up and down he toss'd,
Restless with yearnings for his comrade gone,
His strength, his manhood, and his life's fair flower.
Remembering all their sufferings—all the deeds
Wrought with him and enwoven upon their lives, 10
Warrings with men, sore wrestlings with the waves—
These things remembering, bitter tears he shed ;
Now prone with face to earth, now on his side
Turning, and now upon his back, he lay ;
Then to his feet would start, and o'er the sands
Roam to and fro, lamenting ; morning brake
Above that meadowy coast and eastern sea,
And found him wakeful still. Anon he yoked
His horses to his car, and hung again
Hector to trail behind it ; and, when so

20

Thrice he had dragg'd him round Patroclus' cairn,
Again in mire would leave him, stark and prone,
And seek once more to slumber in his tent.
Yet still Apollo pitied Hector fall'n,
Nor suffer'd aught unseemly there to rest,
But cast about the dead a golden shield,
That not a single hair should suffer harm.

But when Achilles' fury wrought such wrong,
The Gods, beholding from their homes of bliss,
Had pity on noble Hector, and would bid 30
Far-glancing Argeiphontes steal the corse.
And all gave voice, save Herè, queen in heaven,
Poseidon, and the Maiden azure-eyed.
For ev'n as from the first these three had loathed
The people and their king and sacred towers,
So still they loathed them, for the self-same cause,
The curse that Alexander bare to Troy ;
Who judged betwixt the Goddesses, what time
They came before his sheepfold to be judged,
Approving Her, who gave his lust's desire. 40
But when the twelfth day dawn'd above the dead,
Apollo thus amongst the Immortals spake :
" Injurious Gods, and graceless ! Say, were ne'er
Your altars fed of Hector with the flesh
Of bulls and goats ? Whom yet of late from death
Ye saved not, and, now dead, ye will not grant
Back to the sight of his dear wife and child,

Nor to his parents' nor his people's care.
There quickly would they lay him on his pyre,
There all observance to the dead fulfil. 50
Rather ye love to grace this man of blood,
Achilles, though his pride thus overween,
And though his heart be stubborn as a flint—
Brutal as any lion's, fain for death,
Springing to pluck a banquet from a flock,
Fired of a strength and hunger uncontroll'd.
Not more hath he of pity or of shame,
(Shame, man's surpassing profit, or his bane).
Yet well we know that dearest friends are lost,
An own twin brother or a son ; but he 60
Who loseth, after sorrow, findeth rest ;
For Fate hath given endurance unto man.
But, lo, with Hector's death not yet content,
This man hath to his chariot bound the dead,
And trails him still about his comrade's tomb—
Vengeance dishonourable, and perchance
On his own head recoiling, who will change
Our love for his high valour into wrath,
Venting such outrage on the senseless clay !”

But Herè, all in wrath, return'd reply : 70
“ O thou, the Godhead of the silver bow,
Could ye hold great Achilles and the slain
To equal honour, this thy rede might be.
But Hector is a mortal born, and suck'd
The paps of mortal woman ; but the son

The other of a Goddess, whom myself
Cherish'd and nurtured, and at last made wife
To Peleus—Peleus to Immortals dear.

At whose great bridal, Gods, ye all did meet,
Thyself amidst the banquet, harp in hand, 80
Thou faithless, graceless lover of the ill!"

To whom the Ruler of the clouds rejoin'd :
" My Herè, spend not thus on Gods thy wrath ;
We grant not equal honour to the twain.
But likewise thou forget not, that, of all
Who dwelt in Ilion, dearest to the Gods
Was Hector, and, beyond you all, to me.
Who fail'd not of his grateful gifts to heaven ;
Ne'er stood my altar lacking from his hand
Libation, or the steam of victim's flesh, 90
Or aught of offering due to Powers divine.

Yet pass we by this counsel of a theft
To steal away brave Hector ; nor in sooth
Might such escape Achilles ; o'er him still
Wakeful his mother watcheth day and night.
But forth and bid ye Thetis to my side ;
With her some sager counsel will I share,
Whereby Achilles from the king shall gain
Meed of rich gifts, but render Hector home."

He ended, and storm-footed Iris rose 100
To bear the message ; down 'twixt Samos isle
And rocky Imbros, into waters black
She plunged, and o'er her foam'd the level main.

Down straight she dropp'd into th' abyss, most like
Some plummet, that, to tube of cowhorn bound,
Sinks baited to the death of ravenous fish :
Anon within a hollow grot she found
Thetis, around whom sate the Ocean-Nymphs,
Her sisters, where she midmost wail'd the doom
Of him her noble son, in Troy's rich fields 110
Destin'd to early death and far from home.

Whom Iris near approach'd, and thus address'd :

“Thetis, arise ; Zeus calls thee on some hest
Of his eternal wisdom to his side.”

To whom the silver-footed Nymph return'd :
“And wherefore calls He me, who shun for shame,
For very shame, to mingle with the Gods?
Yea, for my heart is breaking with my woes.
Yet tarry, for He will not speak in vain.”

She spoke, the queen of Nymphs, and raised her robe, 120
(Was never azure robe of deeper dye)
And rose, and went ; and Iris led her thence.
The waters stood asunder as they came,
And up the strand they moved and flew to heaven.
There found they their wide-glancing Lord amid
The congregated throng of Gods in bliss.
And Thetis took her seat by Father Zeus,
Athene yielding place ; and Herè put
Into her hands a golden cup, and spake
Her welcome ; Thetis took the cup and drank, 130
Whilst He, the Father of the world, began :

“Thetis, I know the anguish of thy heart ;
Yet, for that thou hast come to this high hill,
Despite thine ineradicable woe,
Hearken ; I tell thee why I call thee thus.
Nine days among the Gods hath strife been waged
O'er Hector's corse, and Hector's mightier foe.
Yea, they had bidden Hermes steal the corse.
But I of my undying love for thee
Will yet another honour to thy son. 140
Quick hie thee to his camp, and give thy hest ;
Tell him, the Gods now murmur, and myself
Beyond all others wrathful, that he still
Holds Hector, in this madness of his soul,
Amongst the long-beak'd barks, nor yields him back.
So may he reverence me, and loose the dead.
Meantime to Troy's great-hearted King I send
Iris, to bid him venture forth alone
Into Achaia's fleet, and bear rich gifts,
To move Achilles and redeem his son.” 150
Nor silver-footed Thetis disobey'd.
Down springing, from Olympus' crests she flew,
And gain'd the tent, wherein she found her son
Yet weeping without ceasing ; but around
His comrades labour'd with all zest, and made
A breakfast ready ; in the tent unskinn'd
The carcase of a sheep before them lay.
Midmost the mother of their chief took seat,
Laid a soft hand upon him, and began :

“ How long, my child, in lamentations lost, 160
Turning thee not to sleep, nor food, nor love
(And woman's love were solace of thy grief),
Consuming thine own heart wilt thou remain ?
Oh, heed thee, for I shall not have thee long
In this world, but already Death and Fate,
Relentless Fate, are standing by thy side.
But hearken, for mine errand is of Zeus ;
He saith, the Gods now murmur, and himself
Beyond all others wrathful, that thou still
Hold'st Hector in this madness of thy soul 170
Amongst the long-beak'd barks, nor yield'st him back.
Then loose him ; take a ransom for the dead.”
To whom her fleetfoot son return'd reply ;
“ If such the great Olympian's will and word,
So be it ; let them ransom home their dead.”
Such converse in the assembly of the ships
Unbroken held the mother with her son.

But Zeus the while sent Iris into Troy :
“ Hence, Iris, haste thee from this high abode ;
And take to Ilion and her noble King 180
This message, that he now redeem his son,
Amid Achaia's galleys venturing forth,
Bearing rich gifts to move Achilles' heart,
Alone—let no man else go with him there.
Only one aged herald let him take
To guide the mules straight, and a gliding car,

Thereon to carry back to Ilion's halls
His body, whom divine Achilles slew.
Nor heed of death be his nor aught of dread ;
So great a guide we grant him, ev'n a God, 190
Far-glancing Argeiphontes ; he shall lead
His feet, and bring him to Achilles nigh.
But when he so hath gain'd Achilles' tent,
Achilles shall not slay him, and shall keep
All others off him ; for no fool is he,
Murderous and aimless, but shall have his heart
Open, and spare the suppliant at his feet."

He ended ; wind-foot Iris rose, to bear
The message, and to Priam's palace sped.
Therein she found the cry of wail and woe. 200
Watering their raiment with their tears, they sate
The children round their father in the court ;
Midmost the old man grovelling on the earth,
With cloak close-drawn around his limbs, but dust
And mire all clotted on his neck and head,
By his own hands besprinkled on himself :
Whose daughters through their chambers wail'd and wept
For memory of the many noble men
Dead, fallen beneath the hands of Argos' sons.
The messenger of Zeus by Priam's side 210
Took station and address'd him ; soft her voice
Saluting ; yet he trembled as he heard :

"Cheer thee, Dardanian Priam, fear thou nought ;
No prophetess of ill, but good, I come,

The messenger of Zeus, who cares for thee,
Albeit remote on high, and pitieth much.
He bids thee now to ransom Hector home,
Bearing rich gifts to move Achilles' heart,
Alone—let no man else go with thee there.
Only one aged herald mayst thou take 220
To guide the mules straight, and a gliding car,
Thereon to carry back to Ilion's halls
His body, whom divine Achilles slew.
Nor heed of death be thine, nor aught of dread :
So great a guide he grants thee, ev'n a God,
Far-glancing Argeiphontes ; he shall lead
Thy feet, and bring thee to Achilles' nigh.
But, when thou so hast gain'd Achilles' tent,
Achilles shall not slay thee, and shall keep
All others off thee ; for no fool is he, 230
Murderous and aimless, but shall have his heart
Open, and spare the suppliant at his feet."
Speaking, wind-footed Iris pass'd away.

Then the King bade his sons to harness quick
With mules a gliding car, and thereon bind
Its sides of basket ; but himself alone
Enter'd the fragrant chamber, cedar-built
And lofty-roof'd, and stored with curious wealth ;
There call'd he to him Hecuba, and spake :
" Message hath come, my wife, from Father Zeus, 240
Bidding me go amid Achaia's fleet,

Bearing rich gifts to move Achilles' heart,
And ransom our dear son. But tell thy thought ;
My own desire and heart are strong within me
To go, yea, 'mid their very camp and fleet."

He ended, but with cry she thus replied :

"Where now that wisdom flown, thy fame of old
Through realms abroad, and this thine own domain ?
Ah me, and hast thou will to venture forth
Alone amid Achaia's barks, and stand 250
Before the face of him who slew thy sons
So many and so noble ? Oh, thy heart
Needs be of steel ! For should thy murderous foe,
The traitor, take thee there, or cast an eye
Upon thee, dream not mercy shown from him !
Rather sit down and mourn with me alone !
Well know I that fell Fate on Hector's birth
Enwove the doom, that he the carrion prey
Of hounds should perish, slain by mightier foe ;
Nathless I now could fasten on his heart 260
And suck his lifeblood who hath slain my son,
Nor then be more than quit ! For not in shame
Nor in wrong cause he slew him, but erect,
Standing before the men and women of Troy,
Fearless, in single battle for their sakes !"

To her the godlike elder gave reply :

"Think not to stay my going ; croak not thus
A bird of evil boding in my house.
Thou wilt not move me. Had he been of men,

A seer, an augur-prophet, or a priest, 270
Then haply we might deem his bidding false,
And put the matter from us. But myself
Beheld the Goddess, heard with mine own ears,
And know her words not vain. Therefore I go ;
Yea, though it be my doom to perish there,
I reckon not ; welcome straight Achilles' sword,
So I may clasp my son and weep my fill !”

He spoke, and off his coffers raised the lids ;
Thence took he out twelve mantles passing fair,
Twelve single cloaks, as many broider'd rugs, 280
As many woven shawls, as many robes.
Next weigh'd ten talents out of gold, full weight,
And bare them forth ; two burnish'd tripods then,
Four caldrons, and a cup of costly work,
Possession of vast price, to him bestow'd
Of Thrace, what time in embassy he came ;
Which yet the old man spared not now to take,
For this his longing to redeem his son.
Then drove he from the corridor the throng
Of townsmen, and in fretful mood reviled : 290

“ Begone, you wretched cowardly brood, begone !
Have ye not grief enow in your own homes,
That thus ye come to fret me with annoy ?
Or gloat you o'er the sorrows of your king,
Stricken by Zeus, reft of his bravest son ?
Ye too shall know the anguish, when ye fall
Far easier victims to Achilles' sword

Than when he lived to save you ! But for me—
Heaven grant, that, ere the spoiler waste and bring
My town to dust, with Hades I may dwell !” 300

He spoke and chased asunder all the throng,
Who ran before the anger'd elder driven.
Then loudly call'd he chiding to his sons,
To Paris, Helenus, Deiphobus,
Pneumon, Polites brave in battle's need,
Hippothous, and the godlike Agathon,
And noble Dius, and Antiphonus ;
These nine he call'd upbraiding, and he bade :

“Haste you, ye vile reproaches to my name !
I would that, so it were that Hector lived, 310
Ye all were dead together in yon fleet !
Unhappy that I am, whose sons of late
Were bravest of all men throughout broad Troy ;
Not one of all those bravest now remains.
Brave Mestor, charioteering Troilus,
And Hector, who was as a God to men,
Nor seem'd of mortal but immortal born—
All these hath Ares ta'en, and in their stead
Left me my dregs—men able well to lie,
Or dance—yea, excellent bright popinjays, 320
And strong to rob my people of their flocks !
Hear ye me not ? Prepare the car, and set
These wares thereon, that we may go our way.”

He ceased ; they quail'd beneath their sire's rebuke,
And lifted forth a litter to the mules,

Well-wheel'd, and fair to view, and newly wrought,
And bound the sides of basket fast thereon.
Then took they down the mule-yoke from its peg ;
A yoke of boxwood ; 'twixt its collars rose
A boss with rings thick studded ; with the yoke 330
They carried forth a rope nine cubits long ;
This they bound fast upon the polish'd pole,
Where the pole ends, and on its ready peg
Let drop the ring whereby the yoke was fix'd ;
Then thrice around the upper boss they twined
The rope, and wound it to and fro, and loop'd
The tag into a knot beneath the pole.
This done, they from the chamber brought and piled
On the smooth-polish'd car the costly gifts,
Ransom of noble Hector ; to the yoke 340
They put the iron-hoov'd mules of draught,
The splendid gift of Mysia to the king ;
Last, led to Priam's car his favourite steeds
(The old man loved to feed them in their stall
With his own hand), and set them near the yoke.

Then in the lofty courtyard of the house
The herald and the King 'gan yoke those steeds,
Silent, for either's soul was sad with thought.
To whom with harass'd heart came Hecuba,
And in her right hand bare a golden cup 350
Charged with soul-soothing wine, that, ere they went,
Libation might be duly pour'd to Heaven.

Across the chariot's front she stood, and spake :

“ Take this, and pour thou forth to Father Zeus
Libation, and make prayer, that home once more
Thou mayst return unscathed from 'mongst thy foes,
Seeing that thy heart impels thee thus to go
Though I be loth to let thee. Therefore pray,
Pray Him, who sitteth in the clouds enthroned
On Ida, and thence looketh wide o'er Troy ; 360
Beseech him that he send on thy right hand
The bird, his wingèd messenger, by him
Best-loved, and mightiest of the fowls of air ;
So, if that sign be to thine eyes vouchsafed,
Thou mayst go forth reliant mid thy foes ;
But if great Zeus withhold his messenger,
I yet again would warn thee, howsoe'er
Thou long to go, yet go not to their fleet.”

Whom godlike Priam answering thus return'd :
“ Woman, thou speakest well, and I obey. 370
Good is it ever to uplift our hands
To Zeus, if haply he may pity us.”

Thus agèd Priam spoke, and order'd quick
Th' attendant matron pour upon his hands
Fresh water : by his side the damsel stood,
Proffering a basin and a pitcher there.
He wash'd, and took the chalice from his wife ;
Then, in the mid enclosure standing clear,
And lifting up his eyes to Heaven, pour'd forth
Libation ; and he utter'd prayer, and said : 380

Father, who from thy throne on Ida rul'st,
Great Zeus, most glorious ! grant me that I find
Favour and grace before Achilles' sight.
So send thy wingèd messenger, best-loved
By thee, and mightiest of the fowls of air,
A sign on my right hand, that, when I see
The sign, my heart being strengthen'd, I may go
Bold through the ships and chariots of my foes."

Praying he spoke, whose prayer the all-wise God
Heard, and straight sent an eagle forth, black-plumed, 390
King of all wingèd creatures, swift to prey ;
As in a rich man's house a door is built
And duly to high-rafter'd chamber barr'd,
So wide each wing outstretch'd on either side.
And o'er the town it flew, and full appear'd
Athwart the right hand darting ; they, who saw,
Joy'd, with hearts quieted and cheer'd thereby.

Then with all haste the agèd King upclomb
The chariot's smooth-bright seat, and drave it forth
Clear of the echoing court and corridor. 400
In front the four-wheel'd litter by the mules
Went drawn, and brave Idæus held the reins ;
Behind, the elder on the car, and press'd
With voice and thong his horses through the streets ;
And weeping with him went his kith and kin,
Mourning, as though he movèd forth to death.
But when, descended from the town, they gain'd

The level, there his sons and kith and kin
To Ilion turn'd them back ; but forward prick'd
The twain in full aspect, nor 'scaped the ken 410
Of Zeus, who with wide-glancing eyes beheld
Pitying, and thus address'd him to his son :

“Hermes, for of all Gods thou most dost love
To add thyself companion unto man,
And, whom thou listest, him to hear and help ;
Now go thou forth, and so guide Priam's feet
Amongst Achaia's galleys, that none else
Of all the host behold him or suspect
Ere he hath gain'd the tent of Peleus' Son.”

He ceased ; nor Argeiphontes disobey'd, 420
But first beneath his feet his sandals bound
Beauteous, ambrosial, golden ; oft their wont
Over the sea, over the limitless earth,
To bear him on the breathings of the wind.
Then took he up the wand wherewith he seals
The eyes of whom he listeth, but from sleep
Awaketh others ; this in hand outstretch'd,
Forth Argeiphontes flew, the guide from heaven ;
And, lighting on the shores of Hellespont,
There walk'd in likeness of some princely boy, 430
When youth's first bloom is fairest on his cheek.

Meantime the twain had pass'd the stately tomb
Of Ilus, and had rein'd upon the stream
Their steeds and mules to drink, for evening now

Had fall'n ; when first the herald mark'd the God
Thus walking nigh, and, startled, turn'd and said :

“ Priam, take heed ; our task requires our care ;
And yonder I descry an enemy near,
Who well may crush us. Say then, flee we now
Together on the chariot, or shall both 440
Fall down, and pray for mercy at his feet ? ”

He ceased ; a cloud came o'er the elder's soul,
For very fear stiff-stricken ; and the hair
Bristled upright along his trembling limbs,
And still he stood, astonied. But the God,
Who loveth man and helpeth, nearer drew,
And took the wrinkled hand ¹, and ask'd, and said :

“ Say, whither, Father, thus these mules and steeds
Through balmy night thou guidest at the hour
When other mortals slumber ? Fear'st thou not 450
The fury of Achaia, nigh encamp'd,
And foes irreconcilable around ?
What then would be thy thought, should they behold thee,
Bearing thy treasures through the night's thick gloom,
Thyself not young, and this one aged man
Thine only guard, should any chance assail ?
But fear not me ; I do to thee no wrong ;
Nay—rather will defend thee ; for my heart
Likens thee to my father far away.”

And godlike aged Priam gave reply : 460

¹ Cowper.

"My Son, these things are ev'n as thou hast said.
Surely some God hath moved him to mine aid,
Sending across my path so fair a guide,
Of such auspicious presence, and of mind
Not less discreet. Blest parents thine, my Son ³!"

And Argeiphontes spake, the guide from heaven :
"My father, fair and seemly these thy words.
But tell me, and speak freely without fear,
Sendest thou forth these treasures from thy home
To be safe-stow'd the while in lands abroad ? 470
Or take ye all your flight from sacred Troy,
For that your bravest, he thy son, the peer
To ev'n Achaia's noblest, now lies low ?"

And godlike aged Priam gave reply :
"Who art thou, noble youth, and whence thy birth ?
I love thee for the honour wherewithal
Thou nam'st the doom of my unhappy son."

And Argeiphontes spake, the guide from heaven :
"Thou tempt'st my tongue, my sire, while thus thou ask'st
Of noble Hector. Him in glorious war 480
Most glorious, oft these eyes have seen, and then
Remember, when with blood-red sword he stood
Cleaving us down amid our very barks.
We look'd and marvell'd ; for Achilles' wrath
'Gainst Atreus' Son forbade us from the war.
He is my lord ; aboard his bark I came,

³ Cowper.

His vassal, of the tribe of Myrmidons.
Polyctor is my father ; he a chief
Wealthy, but now far-stricken in his years
As thine own self ; six sons hath he at home, 490
Myself the seventh ; when we shook our lots
Together, it fell mine to join the host.
This eve I wander'd hither from the fleet
Viewing the plain, where with the morrow's dawn
Again Achaia's sons shall wage their war ;
Who chafe their hearts at this enforcèd rest,
Nor can their chieftains hold them longer back."

And godlike aged Priam gave reply :
" If thou be one of great Achilles' troop,
Tell me the truth, yea, though it be the worst : 500
Lieth my son still whole amid the fleet ?
Or hath he flung him to his hounds piecemeal ?"

And Argeiphontes spake, the guide from heaven :
" My sire, nor hound nor bird hath torn thy son.
Still there beside Achilles' ship he lies
Whole in mid camp. Though this day's dawn the twelfth
That riseth o'er him lying stark outstretch'd,
Yet incorrupt he lies, by worms untouch'd
(Whereto the mightiest yield a meal at last).
Albeit Achilles round his comrade's tomb 510
Remorseless, at each rise of sacred morn,
Drags him his victim, yet he harms him not ;
Thyself wouldst marvel, couldst thou go and gaze,
So dewy-fresh he lies and clear of taint,

The blood wash'd off him, and the mouthèd wounds
All closed, though many were the stabs upon him !
So much the blessed Gods regard thy son,
Though dead, for he was to their hearts most dear."

He spoke, and comforted the King, who said :
" Hence learn thou, Son, how good a thing it is 520
To render to the Immortals gifts their due.
Never would Hector, while he lived, forget
To offer in his palace to the Gods ;
And lo, how they have honour'd him in death !
But take of me this cup, and help redeem
My son, and, by the sufferance of heaven,
Conduct me till I gain Pelides' tent."

And Argeiphontes spake, the guide from heaven :
" My sire, thou speakest this to tempt my youth,
Bidding me take a gift of thee and cheat 530
Thereby my lord Achilles—but in vain.
I fear him, and my heart forbids me seek
To wrong him, lest some evil light on me.
But far as Argos' famous vale thy guide
Willing, on land or shipboard, I would go ;
Nor any durst assail thee, while I guide."

He spoke ; and to the chariot-seat he sprang,
Grasping incontinent the reins and lash,
And breathed fresh vigour on the mules and steeds.

But, when they gain'd the bulwark and the trench, 540
Before the galleys, o'er their late repast

They found the guards still busied ; o'er whose eyes
A cloud of slumber with his wand he shed,
And quickly thrust aside the bars, and oped
The gates, and drew the King within, and all
The wain, and splendid ransom thereupon.
Anon they reach'd the tent of Peleus' Son,
The lofty dwelling for their prince uprear'd
By hands of Myrmidonians ; these had lopp'd
High ribs of fir, and sloped a roof thereto 550
Shaggy, of rushes from the meadow mown,
And round with stake by stake an ample court
Had planted ; to its gate one only bar,
A single beam of fir ; three men were task'd
To lift this to its socket ; three again,
(Such men as others of Achaia's sons,)
To loose the mighty barrier from the door ;
Yet this their lord would lift with single hand.
And this the God of help now oped, and drew
The glorious gift to Peleus' Son within ; 560
Then, from the car dismounting, spake and said :
 " Know me, O King, no mortal, but a God,
Sent by the world's great Father for thy guide,
Ev'n heavenly Hermes. Now I leave thee here,
Departing, nor will see Achilles' face.
Profane it were for an immortal God
To converse overmuch with mortal men.
But enter thou, there clasp his knees, and pray—
By his own father pray him, by the love

He bears his own dear mother and his child— 570
So haply shalt thou move the heart within him.”

He spoke, and to the Olympian steep away
Departed. Priam from the chariot sprang
And left Idæus there to bide and rein
The mules and horses ; but himself passed on
Into the house, wherein the loved of Zeus,
Achilles, ofttest sate ; whom now within
He found, and of his train all lay aloof,
Save two, Automedon and Alcimus.
These stood there ministering to their lord, 580
Who just had ceased regale of food and wine ;
Still stood the table as before him served.
To whom had Priam come unseen, till, lo,
A sudden apparition, there he knelt
Clasping Achilles' knees, kissing the hands,
The terrible murderous hands, that slew his sons !
But as, when one, to whom some foul deed clings,
On whom lies guilt of bloodshed in his land,
Hath fled his village-home, and sudden seeks
Refuge and sanctuary in a rich man's hall— 590

As they to whom he enters stand aghast—
Ev'n thus, when he beheld the godlike form
Of Priam, stood Achilles all aghast ;
Likewise the others, looking each at each ;
Till Priam, trembling at his feet, began :

“ Thy father—O thou image of the Gods,
Achilles, think of him—then look on me,

Like him, upon the threshold-step of death.
Haply the neighbours harry his estate,
Nor hath he who may drive the ill away. 600
Nathless, whilst hearing thou art yet alive,
He still hath joy at heart, and day by day
Hath hope to see his son, from Troy return'd.
A thousandfold more wretched I than he !
The bravest men through Troy were all my sons ;
Not one of all those bravest now remains.
Fifty were mine, or e'er Achaia came ;
Twenty save one were of one mother's womb,
The rest were born of women in my halls.
Already to the war the most had fall'n ; 610
And now the one who yet survived to me,
Sole saviour of his brethren and his home,
Him, standing for his country, thou hast slain—
Ev'n Hector. For which cause I now have come,
Here 'mid mine enemy's fleet, and make this moan,
And bear a priceless ransom. Hear then, hear,
Achilles ! of the Gods have reverence ;
Pity me, if but for thy father's sake !
Yet surely none more pitiable than I,
Who now have borne, what never man on earth 620
Hath borne before me, lifting to my lips
The hands of the destroyer of my sons !”

He ceased, and woke within the other's heart
Mourning and yearning for his father old ;
Who touch'd his hand, yet gently for the while

Repell'd him ; and remembrance melted ³ both.
For Priam, prone before Achilles' feet,
Bitterly weeping lay for Hector's sake ;
Nor less the other wept, by turns his sire
Lamenting, and by turns his own lost friend. 630
Their sound of wail went up and fill'd the hall.
But, when his sorrow's thirst was slaked of tears,
And that strong yearning for his father pass'd,
Sudden divine Achilles, from his seat
Upstarting, raised the elder by the hand,
Pitying the silver head and silver chin,
And with wing'd words address'd him, and replied :
"Verily, vast the evil thou hast borne.
Wretched indeed ⁴ ! Whence gott'st thou this thy strength
Single to venture 'midst Achaia's barks 640
Before the eyes of him who slew thy sons,
A noble brood ? Needs must thy heart be steel !
But rest thee on this seat ; and these our woes,
Despite the pain and anguish, yet awhile
Suffer we to lie buried in our hearts.
For what the gain of all these chilling tears ?
The Gods have wov'n across the web of Fate
One doom to wretched mortals—life with pain ;
Themselves in bliss serene, without a care.
There on the floor of Zeus two vessels lie, 650
Each copious of his wonted gifts to man,

³ Cowper.⁴ Ibid.

But one the good, the other holds the ill :
To whom the Thunder-God bestows of these
Commingling, falls to him now weal, now woe ;
But whom he only from the urn of ill
Endoweth, him he brandeth with a curse,
Him a dire hunger drives about the earth
A wandering outcast, spurn'd of God and man.
Thus hath it happ'd that from his birth the Gods
Gave splendid gifts to Peleus ; all mankind 660
He pass'd in wealth and glory, crown'd the King
Of Myrmidonia, and, though mortal born,
Wedded of heaven to an immortal spouse.
Yet ev'n to him the God hath mix'd this ill,
No issue of fair children round his hearth—
One only son, and he untimely doom'd !
Nor can I help him in his aged need,
Who here must bide, far from mine own dear land,
In Troy, and be a scourge to thee and thine.
So likewise have we heard of thee, old man, 670
And thy high state aforetime ; how of all
Who dwell within the region, to the south
Looking to Lesbos, Makar's island throne,
Northward to Phrygia and the spreading waves
Of Hellespont—of all wast thou most bless'd
In substance and the number of thy sons.
But this the ill appointed thee of Heaven—
Battle and bloodshed ceaseless round thy doors.
Be patient then ; endure, nor break thy heart ;

It boots thee nothing thus to mourn thy son ; 680
For, ere thy tears bring back the dead to life,
I wot, they will have other cause to flow."

But godlike aged Priam gave reply :
" Bid me not sit me down, thou child of Zeus,
While Hector lies untended in the camp ;
Haste thee to loose him, let me gaze my fill ;
And thou accept the ransom that we bring.
And, for that thou hast suffer'd me to live
And see the light of yet another day,
So mayst thou have thy joy of all this wealth, 690
And live to see thine own dear fatherland."

The other then with louring brow replied ;
" Fret me no more, old man ; and know, myself
Am minded to loose Hector. Here to me
A messenger from Zeus my mother came,
The daughter of the elder Ocean-God.
Yea, and full well of mine own wit I know,
O Priam, that a God hath led thy feet
Here 'mid Achaia's barks. No son of man,
No mortal, though in blooming youth's full flower, 700
Durst venture thus amid a hostile host ;
Nor could he 'scape the guards ; and task it were
To lift the bar that binds Achilles' gates !
Beware then ; further anger not a heart
Already stung with sorrow, lest perchance
I bear not this thy presence in my tent,
Though suppliant, and transgress the will of Zeus."

He ceased ; the elder, all in awe, obeyed.
Then, lionlike, Pelides sprang without,
Nor went companionless, but with him moved 710
Automedon and Alcimus, the chiefs
After Patroclus dearest to their lord.
These loosed the mules and horses from their yokes,
And led the herald-comrade of the king
Within the tent, and bade him to a seat ;
Then off the well-wheel'd litter raised and took
The inestimable ransom of the dead ;
Yet left two mantles and one linen robe
Fine-spun, wherewith to pall the dead, or e'er
They gave him to his home. Next call'd they forth 720
Handmaidens, whom they bade anoint with oil
The corse, yet lift it first some space aloof
Lest haply Priam see his son, and, so
Beholding, from the anguish of his heart
Break into wrath, and chafe Achilles more
To slay him, and transgress the will of Zeus.
But, when the maids had wash'd the corse and pour'd
The oil thereon and cast around the dead
The mantle and the robe, Achilles raised
The body off the bier, and, help'd thereto 730
By his own followers, laid it on the wain ;
Then, turning, on Patroclus call'd, and said:
"Be not thou wroth, Patroclus, though thou hear
Haply in Hades' halls, that I have loosed
Thy slayer Hector to his father's hands ;

For ransom hath he render'd, not unmeet,
Whereof thy due I set apart for thee."

Speaking, the heaven-sprung hero moved again
Within the tent, and on the sculptured couch
Whence he had risen, sate, beside the wall 740
Facing the king, whom thus he then address'd :

"Thy son is free according to thy word,
Old man, and on the litter lies without.
At dawn thyself shalt see and bear him home.
But now bethink us of repast awhile.
Not bright-hair'd Niobe herself from food
Refrain'd, though in her halls twelve children fell,
Six daughters slain, six sons in bloom of youth ;
These by the Godhead of the silver bow,
And those by arrow-loving Artemis ; 750
All for Apollo's wrath 'gainst Niobe,
For that she dared herself the equal make
To lovely Leto, yea, and spake her boast
That Leto had but two, she many births :.
Therefore the many fell, slain by the two.
Nine days they lay there, weltering in their blood ;
Nor was there man to bury them, for Zeus
Had changed the neighbouring nations into stone.
On the tenth day the heavenly Gods took ruth
And dug their graves ; and yet their mother, 'mid 760
Her ceaseless weeping, still took thought of food.
Haply she now, a rock amongst the rocks,
Amid the desert hills of Sipylus,

There where they say the Nymphs divine, who whirl
In dance round Acheloius, make their couch,
Changed though she be to stone, retains her woe.
As she, so likewise we take thought for food,
Most noble King ; and, after, weep afresh
Thy son, when thou hast borne him home to Troy ;
Many the tears shall flow for his sake there.” 770

Speaking, the fleetfoot hero to his height
Upsprang, and kill'd a sheep of glistening fleece ;
The which his followers flay'd and carved aright,
And sliced it fine, and pierced each slice with spits,
Then roasted with all care and set it forth.
Automedon put bread along the board
To each in woven baskets, but the meat
With his own hand Achilles, parting, gave ;
And on the dainty fare they laid their hands.

But, when desire of drink and meat had pass'd, 780
Still on Achilles gazing Priam sate,
Marvelling how large of limb, how great of might
The hero was—the peer of Gods he seem'd :
Nor less Achilles on the other gazed,
Marvelling how sweet the face, how soft the voice :
Till, when their eyes were sated with the sight,
First of the twain, the god-like elder spake :

“ Bid them now strew my couch, thou child of Zeus ;
So may we lay us down, and comfort take
Of gentle slumber ; for not yet mine eyes 790

Have closed beneath mine eyelids from the hour
When he my son fell lifeless by thy hand.
Still make I since mine everlasting moan,
Still, grovelling in my courtyard's dust and mire,
On these my myriad sorrows feed my heart.
But now have I partaken of repast,
And suffer'd glowing wine to pass my throat
With thee ; nor had I tasted aught before."

Straight to his word Achilles bade his men
And handmaids set a couch within the porch, 800
Thereon to throw fine purple rugs, and strew
Sheeting above the rugs, and topmost lay
Soft mantles wherewithal to clothe the king.
Forth from the hall they hied them, torch in hand,
And, working might and main, two couches strew'd.
Achilles then with rallying * voice began :

" Needs must thou lie without, mine aged Sire.
Haply some other of Achaia's sons
May enter asking counsel in this tent,
As ever is their wont to ask of me ; 810
And, should he see thee through the night's thick gloom,
Perchance would straight pass on and bear the tale
To Agameinnon, sovereign of the host ;
So were the ransom of thy son delay'd.
But speak and tell me freely without fear ;
What length of days desires thy heart to keep

* Cowper.

The funeral-rite to noble Hector due ?
So many days will I myself await,
So many days will hold the nations back."

And godlike aged Priam gave reply : 820
" If of a truth thou grant me to fulfil
The funeral-rite to noble Hector due,
No greater grace, Achilles, canst thou grant.
Thou know'st how we are leaguer'd in our walls,
And how the hill is far from whence to fetch
The fagots, and the people fear to fetch.
Suffer then that for nine days in our homes
We make our wail, but on the tenth we give
His burial, on the eleventh rear his cairn ;
So on the twelfth to war, since war we must." 830

To whom the noble fleetfoot hero thus :
" Likewise these things shall, as thou biddest, be,
My father ; for so long the war shall cease."

Thus speaking, on the elder's right-hand wrist
He laid his finger, so to stay his fears.
And Priam and his herald in the court
Rested, with trouble at their hearts perplex'd,
While in the inner tent Achilles slept,
The fair Briseis lying by his side.

And all night long, by gentle Sleep subdued, 840
Slumber'd the Gods alike and warrior-men ;
But not the God of help—Sleep seized not him,
Hermes, but still he ponder'd how he best

Might 'scape the sentries watching by the gates,
And guide the king in safety from the fleet ;
At last took station o'er his head, and spake :

“ Seemeth thy trouble light, old man, that thus
Thou sleepest all encompass'd by thy foes,
Here lingering, though Achilles lets thee pass ?
Heavy the price for Hector thou hast paid ; 850
But thrice as heavy ransom will thy sons
Have yet to pay for thee a captive here,
Were this thy presence known to Atreus' Son
Or known to other of Achaia's host.”

Nor more. The elder all in fear awoke
The herald ; to whose aid the God quick yoked
The horses and the mules, and drave them forth
Right through the camp, nor any knew them pass.

But when they gain'd the ford of that brimm'd stream,
Xanthus, own offspring of immortal Zeus, 860
There Hermes to Olympus pass'd away.
And Morn in saffron robes had risen on earth,
And still the twain drave on with wail and woe
Their steeds ; the mules still following bare the dead,
Unseen of man's or well-girt woman's ken ;
Till first Cassandra (mortal-born, yet fair
As golden Aphrodite) clomb the tower
Of Pergamus, and thence descried far-off
Her father, standing upright on the car,
With him the clear-voiced herald of the town, 870

And Hector on the mule-drawn wain behind.
She shriek'd, with cry that rang throughout the streets:

“Men, women, children ! Oh, if e'er ye joy'd
To meet him, coming safe from battle home
(For joy he was to you and all the town),
Forth to meet Hector ; forth to see him now !”

She said, and at the cry forthwith through Troy
Nor man nor woman in the town was left.
Insufferable longing fell on all.

They throng'd, and met the bringer of the dead 880

Hard by the gates : first up the litter sprang
His mother and his wife, and rent their hair
Embracing, and the people wail'd around.

Yea, all that day, even to set of sun,
Had they bode still beyond the gates, and wept
In that their lamentation, but the King
Address'd the people from the car, and said :

“Now yield ye passage to the mules ; within
Pass we ; and there content your hearts with wail.”

He spoke ; they, parting, gave the litter way. 890

Up to his far-famed halls they bore the dead,
There laid him on a polish'd bier, and bade
Their bards sit by him, leaders of a dirge,
A sad low chaunt, and women joined their moan.
To whom Andromache, 'twixt milk-white arms
Clasping the head of Hector, led their wail :

“Young from the earth, my husband, hast thou gone !

[11]

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And left me widow'd in thy home, and this
Thy child a helpless infant—how to grow
To man's estate? For, ere that day arrive, 900
This city shall be tumbled headlong down!
For thou art slain, her guardian—thou, whose arm
Saved her, and still was as a staff, whereon
Her women and her infant children clung.
Now in yon hollow galleys, spoil and prey,
Shall these, and I amongst them, soon be borne;
And thou, mine only boy, 'twill be thy fate
Or to be borne with me, and thenceforth slave
To some stern master, at ignoble task;
Or shall some enemy whirl thee off the towers, 910
Dash thee to horrible death before mine eyes,
Venging a kinsman by thy father slain,
A brother, or a father, or a son—
For deep the grudge, and many an Argive erst
Hath bit his mother-earth by Hector's spear?
No sweet encounter his in battle-fray,
And for this cause the nations mourn through Troy!
Accursed, accursed the anguish thou hast left
O Hector, to thy parents, but beyond
Ev'n theirs, the wretchedness thou leav'st to me! 920
Who dying couldst not stretch thy hand to mine,
Nor speak me one kind word, to be for aye
Remember'd in my weeping, nights and days!"

She ceased in tears; the women joined the dirge,
Till Hecuba in turn led off their wail:

“Dearest of all the children I have borne !
We knew that, living, thou wast dear to Gods,
And they not less have honour'd thee in death.
Of yore, if e'er Achilles captive took
Son of this royal house, he sold him slave 930
Across the barren seas, amongst the isles
Samos or Imbros or the Lesbian cliffs ;
But, when his sword had reft the life from thee,
Many times round Patroclus, whom thou slew'st,
He dragg'd thee, yet not thus undid thy fame.
And now I have thee, to thy home restored
As dewy-fresh, and taintless, as a babe
O'er whom the Godhead of the silver bow
Hath pass'd with gentle darts, and, painless, slain.”

She ceased in tears, and woke an endless moan, 940
Till Helen spake, and led their wail, the third :

“Dearest of all my brethren unto me !
Ye know that godlike Paris is my spouse,
Who brought me here. Would I had died before !
And now the twentieth year hath past and gone
Since I came thence and left my native land ;
Yet never have I heard through all those years
One word of slight or scorning from thy lips.
Nay, if another of thy royal house
Pointed a taunt, a brother's wife perchance, 950
Thy brethren or thy mother—but thy sire
Was ever loving, as he were mine own—
Thou still wouldst chide it, and wouldst stay the blow

With thine own gentle heart and gentle words.
Wherefore I weep thee and myself the while,
Weep for the very anguish of my soul,
For there is none left now throughout broad Troy,
Loving or kind to me—whom all abhor!”

She ceased in tears ; the vast crowd echo'd moan,
Whom then their aged monarch thus bespake : 960

“Trojans, now haste ye to fetch wood within ;
Nor ambush fear nor aught of Argive wile ;
For when Achilles sent me thence, he bade
They should not harm us, ere the twelfth day dawn.”

They heard, and mules and oxen to their wains
Yoked, and without the gates were quickly throng'd.
Nine days they piled the pyre of wood immense ;
But, when the tenth shone forth in light to man,
Weeping they bare brave Hector forth, and laid
The body on the summit of the pyre, 970
And then cast fire therein.

The eleventh morn

With rosy fingers drew night's veil from heaven,
On all the people gathering round the pyre.
When they were gather'd into one vast throng,
Then first they quench'd with glowing wine the pile
Where'er the fire yet linger'd ; next, with tears
Dewing their cheeks, and lamentation loud,
His brethren gather'd up his white-bleach'd bones.
These they put in a golden coffin, pall'd
With purple vestments soft. Anon, they dug 980

The hollow grave, and let the coffin down,
And choked it up with huge thick-wedgèd stones :
Then heap'd a hasty mound of earth above,
Their scouts still couch'd about, on either side,
Lest haply foes assail them, ere the end.
But, when the mound was heap'd, they hied them back,
And all that night in full assembly sate
Feasting on funeral-banquet in the halls
Of Priam, crownèd King, and child of Zeus.

This was their ministry to Hector's grave.

990

Notes to Vol. II.

(*Except where the subject of the note is a Greek word, the references are made to the numbers in the translation.*)

BOOK XIII. 15.—*For thence all Ida stands in clear aspect.*

THE hills of Samothrace are plainly visible from Troas across the island which intervenes. Dr. Kinglake has a well-known passage dilating on the delight of discovering upon the spot the correctness of the ancient poet, in what had, by the atlas and to school-boy apprehension, appeared to be a physical impossibility. Mons Saoce is, perhaps, the hill referred to.

BOOK XIII. 132.—*To purge us (as brave hearts do use) from fear.*

ἀλλ' ἀκέωμεθα θῆσσαν· ἀκεσταί τοι φρένες ἐσθλῶν.

In this passage I have taken the interpretation given by Böhre and others in preference to that of Heyne, who would make ἀκέωμεθα of the active, instead of the middle voice, and refer it to Achilles, the sense then being: "But haste to heal him; noble minds are open to such healing." Mr. Grote must have had this rendering in his mind when he pointed out the inconsistency of such an address with the atonement offered in Book ix. The rendering given in the text does away with any such inconsistency, and avoids also a very abrupt transition in the speech itself.

BOOK XIII. 450.—*Thou wilt not find us niggards in the dower.*

ἐπεὶ οὗτοι ἐδννεται κακοὶ εἰμέν.

The exact force of this sarcasm is a matter of dispute, according as the bride may be dowered by her parents or by the bridegroom. If I may offer an alternative, but less literal, line,—

"We yield not our fair daughters without dower,"

the reference to Cassandra also may be brought out more clearly.

BOOK XIV.—*Whilst o'er them grew a golden cloud, and clung
About them, slowly dropping sparkling dew.*

ἐπὶ δὲ νεφέλην ἔσσωντο
κάλην, χρυσεῖην, στιλπνὰ δ' ἀπέπιπτον ἕρσαι.

It will be seen that I owe these two lines mainly to the imitation of this passage which will be found in Mr. Tennyson's *Ænone*.

BOOK XV. 851.—*As when a master of the horseman's art.*

There is but one other passage in the Homeric poems where the practice of riding a horse at all is alluded to, and there also it occurs as a simile. Odysseus bestrides a plank as a man does a riding-horse (ἄμφ' ἐνὶ δούρατι βαῖνε, κέληθ' ὡς ἵππον ἐλαύνων). This would seem to show that though this use of the animal had sprung up before the poet's own time, yet it was of too recent introduction to permit him to ascribe it to the heroic age of which he sang. The same, perhaps, was the case with the trumpet as a martial instrument; for the poet refers to it in precisely the same way.

BOOK XVI. 322.—*Whose hiving is a common pest to men.*

ξυὸν δὲ κακὸν πολέεσσι τιθεῖσιν. I make the wasps the subject of *τιθεῖσι*, not the children. The Greek will admit either construction.

BOOK XVI. 1034.—*Mourning the bloom and vigour that it left,
The beauty of manhood, and its own sad fate.*

The imitation of this passage in 'Sohrab and Rustum' is worth referring to:—

“Regretting the warm mansion that it left,
And youth, and bloom, and this delightful world.”

The Lectures which Mr. Matthew Arnold gave upon the translation of Homer are too well known to render it necessary for me to say more, than that they contain those critical canons which I should most desire to be considered to have followed in my own attempt. But the poetic qualities shown in 'Sohrab and Rustum,' and in 'Balder Dead,' are so peculiarly Homeric—they are also so cultivated upon the Homeric model—that I will venture to add that, had the critic himself entered upon the task to which he pointed the way, his work would probably have left nothing fur-

ther to be done in that direction. I regret, however, that the English hexameter should have received the benefit of his advocacy. The existence of his own blank verse alone would be to me a sufficient argument against the adoption of so forced an exotic.

BOOK XVIII. 281.—*So the sun sank, and all the host had rest.*

The extreme duration of this day has been fairly criticised. Morning broke at xi. 1; noon is described as having been reached at xi. 100; yet, although the doings of the afternoon have filled seven intermediate books, the sun is now supposed to set before its natural time.

BOOK XVIII. 490.—*Fashion'd in gold, yet like to maids who live,
In whom was speech, and wide discourse, and
strength,
And knowledge of all craft bestow'd by Heaven.*

The lines descriptive of the miraculous qualities given to these statues are confined by some commentators to the living women with whom they are compared. The miracle, it is argued, is not of the mythological type. Yet a sort of parallel may be found in line 438 of this book; and the story of the creation of Pandora presents another case exactly in point.

BOOK XVIII. 596.—*Whether to throw it bare to general spoil,
Or part amongst them by apportion'd lot
The treasures in its glorious walls immured.*

ἢ ἐδιαπραθέειν ἢ ἀνδράχ' ἀντὰ δάσασθαι
κτῆσιν, ὅσων πολλέθρον ἐπήρατον ἐντὸς ἔργει.

I have taken this to mean that the dispute lay between the two armies regarding the mode in which the spoil should be divided; whether each army should have its due share, or each should take what it could get for itself. Another interpretation would explain the dispute as being whether the city should be stormed, or whether half its wealth should be accepted as its ransom. Book xxii. 152, may perhaps be quoted in favour of the latter rendering.

BOOK XVIII. 663.—*And sang the lay of Linos, slender-toned.*

This passage may also be taken in several ways. That Linos was the name of a very early bard, whose birth and death were both ascribed to Apollo, we know from more than one source. And the word, as well as a variation of the word (ἄλιον), ap-

pears to have passed into the name of a song. A fragment of Hesiod speaks of the name as one—

ὅν δὴ ὅσοι βρόττοι εἰσιν αἰδοὶ καὶ κιθαρίσται
παντὲς μὲν θρηνοῦσιν ἐν εἰλαπίναις τε χόροις τε.

The Scholiasts seem unanimous in referring Homer's phrase to this legendary hero, and I have followed them in the text. But there is a word *λυνόν* also, which might mean simply the string of a harp. And the sense would then only be that 'the boy sang sweetly to the string,' or (perhaps) 'the string answered tenderly to his voice.'

BOOK XIX. 105.—*These cast a spirit of wild sin within me.*

ἄγριον ἄτην. The name of Ate has been taken by Shakspeare, both in Julius Cæsar and in Much Ado about Nothing, as the Goddess of Hell; but this by no means represents the early conception. The Homeric meaning may perhaps be best explained to an English ear, by saying that if an early Greek had desired to express the state of mind described by the sacred writers as the hardening of Pharaoh's heart from above, he would have said that Pharaoh was entangled in Ate, or that Ate had obtained possession of Pharaoh. The later proverb, '*Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat*,' is only another form of the same idea. Colonel Mure has remarked that out of the thirty-four times in which the term occurs in the Iliad, it is used in no less than twenty-four with especial reference to Agamemnon's conduct. The word 'sin,' or 'guilt,' which I have adopted in the text, must be taken, of course, with some qualifications, and with the deduction of all Christian associations. But I can find no nearer rendering for the name of the Power, which (in the heathen conception) leads astray, cleaves to, and carries headlong into misfortune, God and man alike.

Where the word is no personification, it commonly represents the crime which formed the first step in the downward course to ruin; but still in most cases retaining the idea of a supernatural hold upon the man who committed it, the feeling of "a presence that is not to be put by;" e. g. xxiv. 480:—

ὅς δ' ὅταν ἄνδρ' ἄτη πυκινὴ λάβῃ δὲ τ' ἐνὶ πάτρῃ
φῶτα κατακτείνῃς—κ. τ. λ.

or ii. 111, Ζεὺς μ' ἄτη ἐνέδησε βαρείῃ, or vi. 356, Ἀλεξάνδρου ἕνεκ' ἄτης; or Odyss. v. 356, where οἶνος Κίνταυρον ἔασεν, and in many other places.

BOOK XX. 86.—*So God met God ; but in the mortal crowd.*

A great difference of opinion has always existed regarding the merits of the six closing books of the Iliad ; many critics having declared that they are unable to rise from their perusal without a painful sense of their inferiority to the earlier parts of the poem ; whilst others have inquired why it is that no poems affect our feelings so strongly as these same books. The nature of the judgment, which any reader will form for himself, will depend, perhaps, upon the side of the narrative on which he is most inclined to dwell. So far as the human element of the story is concerned, it is difficult to detect any falling off. Indeed, the poetry appears to culminate as the climax of the argument is approached ; the pathos becomes more intense as we proceed ; the imagery more copious, and (if possible) more splendid. But, on the other hand, the gods now commence to play a much more active part than has been hitherto assigned to them ; and perhaps on no occasion of their appearance will the reader rise without a sense of disappointment. Even where there is much grandeur in the conception of their action (as in xxi. 270—390), yet it is seemingly of a fantastic, rather than of a real, order. And, more frequently, their interference will be found to be either immoral, or, at least, quite unworthy of any beings held up to our admiration or worship. In the passage to which this note is appended, their appearance has been heralded with a fine burst of poetry ; but no fitting sequel follows. Their battle is deferred till xxi. 456 ; and, when it does occur, is full of details, most vividly rendered by the poet, but degrading to the actors. If, therefore, the books be judged mainly by the greater prominence thus given to the supernatural machinery, they will strike the mind as inferior to much of what has preceded them. But it is an inferiority which, when analyzed, will be found to lie rather in the subject-matter than in the execution ; whilst, in all other respects, I should venture to hold that it is an increase, not a falling off, of power that is perceptible.

BOOK XXI. 127.—*ἀλλά, φίλος, θάνε καὶ σὺ· τῇ ὀλοφύρεαι οὕτως ;
κάθανε καὶ Πάτροκλος, ὅπερ σέο πολλὸν
ἀμείνων.*

These are of the lines which are the despair of a translator. No one can feel the inadequacy of the rendering in the text more than myself. If an expansion of the sense be allowed, I would read (though the improvement is but a slight one),—

Nay, friend, accept thy death, nor make ado :
 Hath not Patroclus, who was nobler far,
 Perish'd before thee ? Perish likewise thou.

Book XXII. 91.—*Lap up my blood, and bask before my doors.*

I had originally translated this passage so as to conclude with a line, *Bask in my gates to unmolested rest*, and have altered it, not because any thought was thereby added which is not contained in the original, but because to draw out such a point in words is not the Homeric manner of exhibiting it, when external facts are sufficient by themselves to convey it. Homer desires to describe the utter friendlessness in which Priam would die, and he does this simply by mentioning that the very dogs that had mangled him would bask about in front of the palace (i. e. without any body caring to drive them away). Such poetry, by mere collocation of incident, or by contrast of simple fact without any verbal antithesis at all, is especially common in Homer, and is one of the characteristics which render his manner so unlike to that of Pope. Take the lines 599—604 of this same book. The contrast between the bright hopes that attended the marriage of Andromache, with its miserable result, is given merely by the fall of the head-dress, which was one of her wedding gifts, at the moment when she sees her husband's fate. Or at xxi. 357 (though in that passage I have thought it better to draw out the meaning more explicitly), the force of a stream is, in the original, suggested only by the fact that brazen armour was carried down on its surface. The instantaneous perception of such correlations was perhaps easier to a Greek than to a modern ear. One more very beautiful instance may be mentioned out of many hundreds. The exaggerated estimate which a wife might form of her husband's prowess could not possibly be conveyed with more brevity or subtlety than when Andromache, in foreshadowing Hector's death, warns him that the Greeks may kill him '*ἄνδρες ἐφορμηθέντες*,' all charging upon him together (i. e. at some vantage, vi. 511)—as though in fair fight he could never be outdone. The ancient poet draws no attention himself to these points ; but if the eye be prepared to observe them, no book can be read without discovering some.

Books XXIII. XXIV.—The doubts regarding the position of these two books as part of the original Iliad have met, perhaps, more general acceptance than those urged against any other portion of the poem. Even Mr. Grote considers that they are, most probably, additions by a later hand. The judgment of Paris ;

the nurture of Thetis by Here ; the position of Athene at the side of Zeus ; the legend of Niobe ; the appearance of Cassandra on the scene ; the employment of Hermes as the messenger of Zeus, as in the *Odyssey* (whereas in the *Iliad* elsewhere that function is given to Iris) ; the date affixed to the rape of Helen ; are all, it is asserted, so many points drawn from later traditions and now for the first time exhibited in the *Iliad*. A few, but not numerous, words and expressions are also adduced, as common to these books and to the *Odyssey*, but not to the remainder of the *Iliad*. The more subdued character of their colouring and tone is also said to be consentaneous with the general temper of the *Odyssey* rather than with the more impetuous *Iliad*. The reappearance of Odysseus and Diomed in Book xxiii. without their wounds, is a further argument not devoid of force, but which has been already touched upon in the Note to Book viii.

Yet there is hardly any book throughout the poem against which some similar objections could not be urged. Take the first book, for instance, against which scepticism has been comparatively silent. No subsequent mention appears either of the journey of the gods to Ethiopia, or of the delivery of Zeus from a conspiracy by the hands of Briareus at the counsel of Thetis, or of the fall of Hephæstus to Lemnos ; and the last-named story is in contradiction with another account given in Book xviii. Many other books also will be found to contain ἀναξ λεγόμενα, or some words or expressions not repeated elsewhere. All that is said, therefore, on this score, would be more fairly merged in the general question regarding the mode in which the whole poem, as we have it, was composed, than treated as specially applicable to the part which is the subject of the present Note.

The attention may be justly drawn, on the other side, to the very striking and artistic balance which exists between the first and last cantos of the poem as they now stand. They alone present a very rapid and numerous succession of events ; they alone occupy a period of more than twenty days each ; they alone are almost devoid of extraneous ornament in the way of simile. Such points are perhaps of natural occurrence, both at the opening and at the close of a long narrative ; but they are of too systematic a character to be fortuitous. The coincidence has been dwelt upon especially, and in detail, by Colonel Mure.

It is true, I think, that a certain difference of tone is perceptible in these two books from that which has previously prevailed. But is not this abundantly accounted for by the change of subject ? The lull of the storm is depicted in quieter colours than those in

which its ravages were represented. Such doubts have perhaps met with more ready favour, because they fall in with a view which has been held by more critics than an ordinary reader would have expected to find entertaining it. The epic, it is argued, should have closed with the death of Hector; and all that follows upon that event is so much superfluous matter, not likely to have entered into the conception of the original master. There is a corresponding languor of action and deterioration of poetry also. The latter point is perhaps only a matter of feeling; but I know of hardly any poetry to be paralleled with that contained in the vision of Patroclus, in the chariot race, in the interview of Priam with Achilles, or in the laments over the body of Hector. And I cannot but hold the former part of the criticism to be equally unsound. It is more legitimate art, it is certainly more in accordance with all that we gather of Greek taste, to conclude the epic of the wrath of Achilles by the representation of the manner in which it was appeased rather than by that of its indulgence at its highest and most ungovernable pitch. The balance of the hero's character has been entirely overturned by his grief for Patroclus, and by his fury against the cause of his loss. The honours which attend the funeral of his friend form one step by which that balance is restored; the surrender of the body of Hector completes the restoration. Unless the national hero was to be left mutilated of half his qualities, that portion of the poem which portrays his cure seems hardly less necessary than that which has portrayed his temporary madness. I have elsewhere urged that, if the unity of this character throughout be taken in conjunction with the grandeur and force of its delineation, the conclusion is almost forced upon us that there is no part of it which has not proceeded from the same master hand.

It may be admitted, indeed, that the songs which the poet pressed into his own service must have been both numerous and comprehensive. It may be admitted also that the skill or care with which he has incorporated the contingents thus drawn to his help from all quarters of his wanderings, has been of varying success. And yet it will remain good that the relation in which he stood to his materials, was that of Shakspeare to the historical chronicles, of Goethe to the mediæval story of Faust, of Tennyson, in our own day, to the Arthurian legends, not that of a compiler to a compilation. And it is to the man (at whatever date he may have thriven) who so gathered into a single river the ballads floating throughout his country; who fused their various dialects and measures into his own liquid speech; who

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